

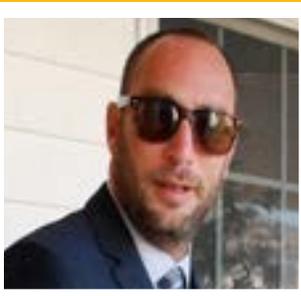


VCU Brandcenter Friday Forum

Jan. 31 / 11am-12:30pm / VCU Commons Theater / 907 Floyd Avenue

Ryan Berger

Founder/Chief Creative Officer / Berger Shop



When Euro RSCG won the Polaroid business, Ryan's task was to buzz the hell out of the brand by linking it to the absolute latest in pop culture. Turns out the hottest rap group at the time was OutKast. Also turns out that their number one single, "Hey Ya," happened to feature the lyric, "Shake it like a Polaroid picture." But how to get in touch with the group? The answer was right there in the Blackberry. The owner of a retail sporting goods store in Atlanta had contacted Ryan about an item, and the two of them had ended up shooting the breeze about music. Three guesses who knew OutKast's manager. A few days later, Ryan was in touch with the group, and rest is pop culture history. Thanks to OutKast, Polaroid was in celebrity hands everywhere, from Saturday Night Live to the Vibe Awards to the Grammys.

A pop culture icon was born. And so was a career in buzz marketing.

For winning one of the top non-traditional campaigns for Polaroid by Adage, Ryan was featured on the cover of 25 Twenty Something's to Watch. Since that time, his career has taken off, soon running the Buzz Group at Euro RSCG, creating buzz for many of the Euro RSCG clients.

Five years ago, Ryan left Euro RSCG, and started his own cultural marketing agency, Berger Shop, which specializes in injecting brands into today's culture. Its clients engage Berger Shop for word of mouth strategies, creative ideation, digital programming, off and online execution, and his clients represent both the brand side, as well as agencies, working with some of the premier agencies in the world to bring this capability in-house. Ryan tends to work across all clients to make sure the right people are buzzing about the brand, whether that is through product placement, event marketing, influencer marketing, or any other non traditional vehicle that creates word of mouth that will benefit the Berger Shop clients' best.

Ryan is also a professor at NYU, teaching a course titled "From Blogs to Buzz, How to Use New Media," and a partner in the red-hot nightclub, Tenjune, located in the meat-packing district in downtown NYC. He is a governing member of WOMMA, the word of mouth marketing association. He lives in the West Village with his wife, Amy, their 6-year-old son Cassidy, 3-year-old daughter Charlie, and their puppy Hudson.

Topic / From Television to Twitter: Growing up in an advertising family.

Descriptor / The talk will feature what it was like to grow up in a home where advertising was the dominant conversation. Whether it was about production shoots, or simply watching and dissecting commercials, at a very young age I was exposed to the world of advertising. The talk will also take you through 4-5 career defining case studies, along with hearing the career path, going from working at my dad's agency, Euro RSCG, to finding my own path and starting my own agency, Berger Shop. The talk will also focus on the evolution of the area in marketing Berger Shop is most passionate about, culture and the intersection between culture, brands, and consumers.