

Design Studio



Meet Cindy:



Cindy is a Design Director. She manages a team of 50 or more people in her organization. Cindy is responsible for taking 1000's of concepts and turning them into great products. Each season she pulls together concepts for color, fabric, graphic and silhouette research from the past, the present and the future. Working with Tim, her Merchandiser, she moves concepts from their infancy to maturity, touching on every phase of the design lifecycle. Her team of graphic artists, pre-production experts, material R&D and technical designers collaborate daily to keep stores filled with hot merchandise

What does Cindy want?

“The reason I love what I do is because it gives me the freedom to be creative and artistic while understanding the business repercussions of what we do. Many people think that design is purely creative. But to be good at this work, you have to have a global understanding of product AND the business of managing a product development team. We are not rocket scientists, but trust me, our product has to go to the moon lots of times. We need to get products from trend concepts to finished sample in weeks. We have gone from 4-6 deliveries annually to 12 and sometimes 24! The challenge is keeping our product pipeline moving, getting everyone to focus on each little aspect of the process and collaborating like the large vertical retailers, even when we are not! Today, having visibility, accountability and control is a dream. What we have is a lot of well-trained people, working as hard and as fast as they can. I want my team to be productive, not burnt out.”

Before Zweave



“Our job in design is to go from sketch to sample as fast as we can.

Every step of the way we have to communicate our ideas visually through storyboards, swatch cards, sketches, store samples, color, artwork and logos. Today, to support this visual collaboration we have to spend hours in meetings, it's the only way. Our tools for communicating ideas are limited to CAD for graphics and PDM for “tech packs”. We use e-mail as best we can, but our files are massive and when we PDF them, everything clogs up! So, we go back to paper, color copies, boards and binders. We make so many changes on every style we develop that just updating of information and reports uses up time we barely have. Communicating those changes is usually done through email and unless you're part of the trail, you have no idea what version of the truth everyone is on. The mortality rate of our design is costing us. Even though we are expected to make 1000's of samples, we end up throwing more than half away because the ideas or the execution don't meet our standards. But lots of time we remake things we already tried months before, but because we have poor systems for archiving designs and samples – we start from scratch again. If we could eliminate just the redundancy, imagine the time and money we would save. Someone is going to realize this and become an industry hero!

After Zweave

“I use every Studio in Zdesign.

Even though design is my primary Studio, I literally go from one studio to another all day long. If I wanted to do that in the physical world I would be in meetings all day long and walking the hallways, calling people every five minutes for reports, updates and approvals. Now, it's as simple as surfing the Internet. I don't slow the process down when I am not available. We've gone from this linear workflow to something dynamic and real time. What a difference! You can tell designers built Zdesign - they understand the pain and complexity of each step and activity and have created tools to support everything we do in one solution. For instance, each “tech pack” we create is specific to a vendor and tracked that way. We used to create one “tech pack” send it to 3 vendors and then track it back and forth, thinking it's one style. The truth is, it's not really the same style at all. Each vendor has his or her own changes, approvals, and schedules. Design Studio supports this concept. Design Studio makes for better communication and follow up with our partners possible, and we are more organized and in control. When we get really busy, we hire a dozen freelancers to keep us up to speed. With Zdesign, I can give each one access to their own studio and they can work in the same environment we do. Most of my freelancers use Zweave's MyZdesign to manage their portfolios for their freelance assignments. They are already used to working on the same system, which saves us time training. The cost of all of this is what really makes it great. I can support my entire team and my key development chain partners with a budget that does not even make our CFO blink an eye!”