



Feeding the global appetite for digital content

There was a growing appetite for high-quality digital content even before the pandemic. Shipleys client Unit 9 is well-placed to feed that need.

Describing itself as a global production partner that “innovates content with love”, Unit 9 creates popular content for film, web, mobile, games, experiential and live advertising, as well as augmented and virtual reality experiences.

Over the years, it has grown both organically and by acquisition and now has offices in Los Angeles, New York, London and Lodz. At the heart of its successful approach is the collaboration and creativity of its team of innovation architects, product designers, software engineers, gaming experts, creatives, art directors, designers, producers and film directors.

A Focus on quality

Unit 9 has always been passionate about the quality and integrity of the creative industries in which it's involved. The business is an active member of a number of industry bodies developing standards, processes and best practices.

A look at the impressive roster of global brand names it regularly supports pays testament to Unit 9's success and impressive reputation. In addition, it has won several accolades over the years, including Campaign Tech Company of the Year (in both 2021 and 2020) and AdAge Production Company of the Year (2019).

Systems assurance

Shipleys has worked with Unit 9 for many years – in particular to support its specialism in the Games arena. Given the volume of projects Unit 9 typically works on, one area of focus has been to help the business achieve its goal of strengthening financial systems and having greater rigour across all its accounting processes. This has been particularly important given the impressive growth the business has experienced, and its plans for that to continue.

Unit 9's Financial Controller, Jo-Anne Blake, says Shipleys' help has “enabled us to establish efficient systems and approaches which are easily transferable to new and different entities in the business”. She also values Shipleys' “plain English” guidance on the latest statutory regulations affecting the company.

Video games tax relief

Unit 9 also turned to Shipleys for assistance to successfully claim the government's video games corporation tax relief. Jo-Anne comments: “The process of claiming the relief can be quite daunting to the unfamiliar, and it was reassuring to turn to Shipleys' specialists for help. They guided us through the process and handled the claim and liaison with the British Film Institute and HMRC on our behalf.”

The tax relief can be worth up to 20% of the core production

costs of a game if it meets the qualifying criteria. Shipleys and Unit 9 worked closely together to ensure claims for its games were indeed successful.

Globalisation of content and talent

The globalisation of media in recent years has meant there is a constant demand for content, as well as an explosion in potential audience sizes. Unit 9 has expanded into different territories to capitalise on fresh talent and become established in key creative communities around the world.

Group Financial Director for Unit 9, Simon Weatherseed, says Shipleys' international connections through its membership of AGN (a worldwide association of independent accounting firms) has been useful in this regard. It has enabled Unit 9 to tap into local fiscal, legislative and commercial knowledge for a specific territory when required.

A valued business partner

Simon also adds: “We have really appreciated the deep understanding Shipleys have of us. Not only are they sector specialists, they have a really good knowledge of what we do and our ambitions.”

This pre-established learning curve means you can have commercially focused conversations with them that are hugely helpful and productive. The firm is a good business partner for us.”

Both Jo-Anne and Simon also stress they've valued their dedicated Shipleys team and the enthusiasm and interest the team continually demonstrate for Unit 9's business and objectives.

Looking ahead

With fresh technological advances and the ongoing global hunger for fresh digital content, Unit 9's innovation and creativity will no doubt remain in high demand.

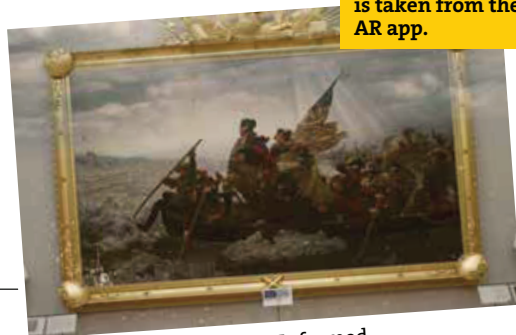
Offering advice to other creative businesses, Simon Weatherseed concludes: “To achieve the growth plans of a business, it's really important to be able to call on specialist help. Select an adviser who truly understands your business and is suited to its size and stage of development. If you can gain that alignment with your advisers, you'll remove so much hassle and effort longer term. Together, you can focus solely on benefitting the business and making it a success. I thoroughly recommend Shipleys in this regard.”

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UNIT9

Recent examples of Unit 9's AR and VR work.

The image at the top of the page is taken from the JFK Moonshot AR app.



The Met Unframed



Lotus Cars/ Goodwood Festival of Speed