

Mission-driven design.  
Communications with clarity.  
Purpose-driven results.

# Welcome

**ÆSPIRE**<sup>®</sup>  
design with purpose

**Aespire** is a design and marketing communications that empowers nonprofits, foundations, and higher education to raise their voice, advance their mission, and achieve purpose-driven results. We work with leaders like you who strive to become a leading voice for your cause—yet are challenged to rise above the noise, inspire change, and motivate action.

We merge creativity, strategy, design thinking, and open-source technology to enable powerful causes to discover and raise their voice in a noisy world.

INSPIRE TO ENGAGE

Learn what guides us at [www.causemanifesto.com](http://www.causemanifesto.com), and read our book *Raise Your Voice: A Cause Manifesto*, available exclusively from Amazon.com.



## clarity

### Think first, then do

Our work is based on a strategic process that we call Clarity. The Clarity process is powerful – Time after time, we find our clients start to use the language of the process as soon as we begin.

Clarity starts with focus, transforming your positioning and revealing your true differentiation.

Clarity is the foundation for focused communications strategy, and finds form when strategy and mission-driven design connect with One Voice to tell your story. Your message will resonate with the people who advocate for your cause and support your organization.

Our Engagement Continuum identifies the touch points that deliver your message and stories, through One Voice, establishing credibility and building a foundation of awareness.

The results are loyal, trusting and long-lasting relationships with your audiences.

### How we work

Aespire has an established history of long-term client relationships.

We feel the best client relationships are formed when:

- There is a good fit between Aespire and your staff, objectives, and culture.
- Clients have previously worked with a professional agency.
- Clients recognize the value in beginning a relationship with a conversation, and not an RFP.
- Clients consider us as an asset to their organization.
- Clients anticipate that we will challenge their expectations as we clarify their objectives, recommend strategy and lead by design.
- Clients are open with their budgets, expectations and outcomes.
- Decision makers are courteous with schedules and timing.
- Clients respect our expertise and recommendations.
- A trusting relationship is possible.
- Clients are comfortable with us making a fair profit.
- We celebrate our wins together.

## culture

We view our client relationships as a collaborative exchange of expertise, experience and knowledge.

We know that you want to work with Aespire because you're looking for focused expertise (and a fresh perspective) in your identity, marketing and design communications, and trust that you will understand how we can help as you learn more about our firm's culture and processes.

Our clients anticipate that we will challenge their expectations as we clarify their objectives, recommend strategy and implement mission-driven design solutions.

The clients we work with are seeking to create, build and nurture relationships with their community – advocates, ambassadors, volunteers, donors, association members, supporters, followers and other stakeholders – who want to connect with and believe in the cause.

Every relationship begins with a conversation. Let's start talking!

### Our Values:

Every day, we will practice:

- Respect for individuals,
- Integrity through character,
- Leadership with passion,
- Communications with clarity,
- Excellence in design

to establish trust in our relationships with clients, partners, and among ourselves.

### Professional affiliations

- AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts, [aiga.org](http://aiga.org)) since 1985
- AFP (Association of Fundraising Professionals)
- UCDA - University and College Designers Association ([ucda.com](http://ucda.com))
- NNCG (National Network of Consultants to Grantmakers)
- Type Directors Club ([tdc.org](http://tdc.org))
- SOTA (The Society of Typographic Aficionados, [typesociety.org](http://typesociety.org))
- The Communications Network

### Online at

[www.aespire.com](http://www.aespire.com)

[www.aespire.com/blog](http://www.aespire.com/blog)

[www.aespire.com](http://www.aespire.com)

Mission-driven design is a catalyst for cause communications.

### Our Core Team

**Brian Sooy** (Principal)

440.322.5142 ext.1

[brian@aespire.com](mailto:brian@aespire.com)



A graduate of Bowling Green State University and Lorain County Community

College, Brian is president and creative director with over 30 years of experience in marketing, design, type design and new media. Brian's role includes strategic development, epiphany generation and creative direction.

Brian serves on the board of Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio, and is a member of AFP, AIGA, NNCG, TDC and UCDA.

**Bob Slatt** (Web Developer)

440.322.5142 ext.2

[bob@aespire.com](mailto:bob@aespire.com)



Bob is a graduate of Pittsburgh Technical Institute and holds a

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science degree from Fairmont State University. Bob's skills and experience provide our clients with expertise in interactive and new media.

**Vance Williams** (Designer)

440.322.5142 ext.3

[vance@aespire.com](mailto:vance@aespire.com)



Our lead graphic designer, Vance holds a Bachelor of Science in Graphic Design degree, with a minor in Journalism and Communications.

**Lisa Sooy** (Partner)

440.322.5142 ext.4

Lisa is vice president and treasurer of Aespire, and manages the financial and HR aspects of the business.

### Strategic Partners

We have a highly qualified network of public relations, photography, writing, video and related professionals who complement our core team.

Our web development team is backed by a support team with engineers located in Michigan, Poland and India.

## office

### Contact information

Aespire  
151 Innovation Dr.  
Elyria, OH 44035-1676

(440) 322-5142  
brian@aespire.com

### Hours and availability

You are welcome to visit at any time, and we encourage you to stop by during regular hours, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm EST.

Aespire observes summer hours from Memorial Day through Labor Day. During this time, our hours are 7:30am through 5pm, Monday through Thursday; and 7:30am to 11:30 am Friday.

We also close annually between December 25 and the first business day in January of the new year.

We work hard, and we play hard!

### Coffee

We really, really love coffee. Especially hazelnut and Phoenix Coffee Blue Moon. Stop in and we'll brew a fresh pot.

### Client work area

A designated client work area is available and includes wireless internet access. We encourage you to use our space as a quiet place to focus. It's like an oasis in a desert.

### How our phone system works

Aespire uses a state-of-the-art VOIP phone system. The delay you may experience upon calling is a feature that locates us during business hours, whether we are in our office or off-site. Pretty cool, eh?

Please review the online staff page for our direct dial voice and fax lines.

### Sending Files

You can send digital files via Google Drive or other file sharing services with which we work.

Please contact us for details.

Please visit [aespire.com/resources](http://aespire.com/resources) for available resources.

### Location

Aespire serves North America from  
5061 N Abbe Rd, Suite 2  
Sheffield Village, OH 44035

A Google Map with an exact location is available at [aespire.com](http://aespire.com). We're easily accessible by road, water, and air – 30 minutes from Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

### Parking

Guest parking is located outside our front door at ground level.

### Directions

#### From the South:

- Follow Abbe Road north past Lorain County Community College.
- Look for our roadside sign, turn right into the parking lot.
- Aespire is located in Suite 2.

#### From the North:

- Follow the signs to Lorain County Community College from I-90/Rt 2.
- Turn left on Rt 254.
- Turn Right on Abbe Rd.
- Follow Abbe Road 1/8 mile.
- Look for our roadside sign, turn left into the parking lot.
- Aespire is located in Suite 2.

Of course, you can always find us on the web or social media.

## relationship

We want to ensure that there is a good fit between your organization and Aespire. We are client-focused, and the impact that our expertise can have on your organization is profound.

You're invited to hear from about the experiences of your peers at [aespire.com/testimonials](http://aespire.com/testimonials).

### Access

You will have the best experience, and we do our best work, when Aespire is working in collaboration with key decision makers.

We are accustomed to working with executive and senior management, communications officers and marketing professionals.

### Meetings

Because time is very valuable, our goal is to keep meeting time to a minimum. Before we meet with you, we recommend that the meeting leader prepare an agenda, to guide the meeting to a successful outcome.

Let's stay focused!

### Confidentiality

During the course of our relationship we may acquire knowledge regarding your business that may not be accessible or known to the general public. We understand that this knowledge is proprietary and it will not be shared with anyone outside of our office.

We do reserve the right to share with our existing and prospective clients that we work with you, and to show our work created on your behalf after it is made public.

Sometimes we are involved in proprietary or private projects. Your secrets are safe with us.

During the development stage of a project, Aespire is willing to sign a non-disclosure statement for the duration of that project.

Rest assured, our word is our bond. Honesty, trust and integrity are three of the highest ideals we follow.

### Responsiveness

Responsiveness is important to us; we will return all phone calls and email in a timely manner. We also understand that deadlines are inherent to your business; we will do everything possible to meet and/or exceed any deadlines you are working within.

We do recommend that issues of timely importance be addressed by phone.

Email is not foolproof. Please call 440.322.5142 if you have not been responded to in a timely manner.

We do expect that our clients will proof the content of their projects thoroughly, and approve them in a timely manner. Please allow adequate proofing time in your business schedule for review during the course of a project or campaign, according to the production schedule.

Revisions and edits to documents may be submitted by email, PDF or fax. We do not take edits by telephone, as we must have a verifiable record of client change requests.

### Vendor Relations

Aespire engages with strategic partners that complement our expertise. Our creative and technical partners are located in North American and Europe.

These partners represent us, and therefore reflect our values and approach to serving our clients.

### File ownership and archiving

Files created in the course of a project remain the property of Aespire, which retains right of first refusal on alterations. At no time is our work for a client considered work for hire, unless full rights and compensation for complete rights is negotiated. All ownership rights will be outlined in our contract. Visual brand identity projects are wholly owned by the client. Custom typeface designs are licensed and wholly owned by Aespire.

All files are archived internally and externally as part of our risk management policy.

## accounting

We think it's good practice for everyone to understand how we're going to work together in every aspect of our relationship. The financial area is no exception.

### New clients

For new clients, we typically will require a 30% project initiation fee to begin work. As our relationship becomes established, terms for each project will be handled on a project-by-project basis. If your organization requires vendor registration or purchase orders to be issued, please let us know as soon as possible to ensure that we can invoice in accordance with our agreement.

### Billing

For first time and projects totaling over \$20,000, one-quarter to one-half of the project total will be invoiced upon receipt of a signed project agreement; the remaining balance is invoiced in phases as outlined in the contract.

Outside costs will be billed upon receipt of the invoice from our associate or partner, during the course of a project. All costs are subject to our standard payment terms.

### Payment Terms

All invoices are due net 30 days. A service charge of will be added to all balances not paid within 30 days. Charging interest to past-due accounts does not indicate that the Agency has agreed to extend terms. Payment must remain current for Aespire to proceed with any further assignments and/or media placements.

Checks can be made out to Aespire. (Aespire® is a registered trademark; Aespire Inc. is an Ohio S Corp).

### Statements

Statements will be issued monthly in the case of past due invoices.

### Overdue hosting fees

Overdue web hosting fees will result in the suspension of the web site until fees are paid in full. Don't be late!

### Markups

Outside services will be billed at agency cost plus 18%. These include any services required by a specific project such as, but not limited to, printing, filming, recording or photography.

### Media Commissions

Media commissions earned for the placement of media on the Client's behalf will be retained by the Agency. All non-commissionable media placed on the Client's behalf will be billed at Agency cost plus 18%.

### Fees

All fees are determined on a project-by-project basis. Certain projects will be estimated in advance. An hourly fee will apply when the scope of work exceeds the original parameters of the original fee and project scope.

A minimum fee applies to projects for clients who request services on an occasional basis.

If we have a retainer agreement, the retainer fee plus overages will be invoiced monthly at net 30 days.

### Taxable Items

Current law requires that deliverable items are taxed at the tax rate of the county in which they are delivered. If you are tax exempt, please provide a tax-exempt form with your payment.

### Handling Disputes

We prefer to resolve disputes in person and with a one-on-one meeting. If a dispute arises, please call Brian Sooy, principal of Aespire, at (440) 809-8970.

### Handling Praise

If we've exceeded your expectations, or one of our staff is exceptional, please let us know. We also appreciate referrals and kind words on social media!.

We want your experience working with Aespire to be memorable and positive. We'll ask from time to time about how we're doing, and look forward to your honest feedback.

Our relationship with you is very important to us, because life is not about business... it's about relationships.

Now—how we can help you advance your mission and connect with your followers through strategy, design, and communications with clarity?

***Let's change your world!***

For relevant case studies, and to experience how your peers have worked with Aespire, visit [aespire.com](http://aespire.com), or call us at 440.322.5142.

Aespire is the leading design and communications agency that helps purpose-driven causes and organizations design strategic outreach programs, engage stakeholders, and advance meaningful causes.

### **Disciplines:**

#### **Strategy**

- Positioning
- Culture Alignment
- Communications Planning
- Visual Identity Design

#### **Design+Communications**

- Annual Reports
- Capabilities Brochures
- Fund Raising Campaign Support
- Literature Systems
- Marketing Communications
- Marketing Campaigns
- Publication Design (Print, ePub and Digital)

#### **Online Presence and Experience**

- Web Site strategy and development
- Interface design
- Interactive CD-ROM
- Mobile Apps
- Social Media Strategy

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