TentCraft

BEYOND THE AI RENDER

Turning AI concepts into buildable booths.



A CONVERSATION WITH
DAWN ADNEY
WORLD CLASS DISPLAYS



Meet Dawn Adney,

Senior 3D Designer at **World Class Displays**. With a background in architectural and spatial design, Dawn brings a practical perspective to the evolving role of AI in booth design. Her work explores how AI can help visualize ideas and streamline the design process while still accounting for the real-world constraints of building and producing an exhibit.

1. Where is AI creating the most value for you in the creative or concept-development process right now?

For me, as a 3D designer, the biggest value AI is creating right now is after the initial concept has been developed. I use AI to help create temporary graphics, imagery, and visual elements that I can incorporate into my 3D models. My background is primarily architectural and spatial design, so graphic design isn't necessarily my strongest area, and AI helps me bridge that gap and move concepts forward more efficiently.

Looking ahead, I see even greater potential for AI through automation of routine, repetitive tasks within our day-to-day workflows. That could free up more time tocfocus on the areas where our experience and creativity have the most impact; developing strong concepts, solving design challenges, and creating compelling experiences.

2. When an AI-generated concept needs to become a real-world activation or finished customer design, what challenges, if any, are you running into between the initial idea and something that can actually be designed, produced, or printed?

One of the biggest challenges I see is that AI can create something that looks incredible visually, but it doesn't necessarily understand the real-world constraints that come with experiential and tradeshow design; things like scale, structural feasibility, physics, budget, materials, fabrication, venue restrictions, and show rules.

Sometimes a client will come to us with an AI-generated concept that looks amazing but isn't realistically producible as shown. At that point, our role becomes translating what they responded to emotionally into something that can be designed and built. We must identify the elements they loved most and determine how we can preserve that vision while making it feasible.

The challenge is that this can sometimes feel like a compromise to the client. They've already seen the idealized AI version, so anything we modify can feel like a lesser version of the original, even when the real-world solution may actually be a stronger design.

I think there's a great opportunity for AI to become more effective when it's paired with the expertise of a designer from the beginning. Rather than starting with a beautiful image and trying to make it work afterward, I'd prefer to start with the client's needs, goals, brand, audience, space, and practical requirements, and then use AI as part of the design process. That allows us to create something that is both visually compelling and realistically achievable, rather than designing toward a compromise.

3. What do you think still needs to improve before AI can play a bigger role in taking experiential ideas from concept all the way through execution?

I think one of the biggest things that need to be improved is industry-specific knowledge within AI tools. It would be incredibly valuable if we could provide clients with a curated set of prompts and guidelines developed by people who understand the experiential and tradeshow industry.

That would allow clients to maintain creative control over the initial concept while giving them a better chance of generating ideas that are relevant to what can be designed, fabricated, and executed in the real world.

There are so many variables in our industry, different construction systems, materials, extrusions, fabrication methods, venues, and show regulations that a general AI tool can only take you so far. I think the next step is developing AI that understands those industry-specific constraints.

Until we get to that point, I see well-crafted, industry-informed prompts as a practical solution. They can help bridge the gap between a client's creative vision and what our industry can realistically bring to life, while still allowing the designer to take that idea and elevate it through their experience and expertise.