

Creative Copy & Design Offers Award-Winning Marketing Services

By Jen Holden June 30, 2022



Photo by Timorah Beales courtesy of Creative Copy & Design LLC.

YORK-Most small-business owners in York County have probably heard of Melissa James or read her name in print. James is the owner of Creative Copy & Design, LLC. Her byline often appears as a contributor with York County Department of Economic and Tourism Development [business features](#). As a web designer, James has left a footprint on many local websites, newsletters, and more. As an ardent volunteer, the children of many local parents may have met

James while she was volunteering with the York County school division's Career Day and other special events.

James grew up in Charlotte, NC, and moved to Hampton Roads in 2005. Before starting her own business, she worked as a managing editor with Colonial Williamsburg's Products Division from 2005 to 2008, as the marketing director with the Downtown Hampton Child Development Center from 2008 to 2014, and with The Curtis Group nonprofit consulting firm in Virginia Beach from 2014 to 2017.

Since establishing Creative Copy & Design LLC in 2013, she's written, edited, and/or designed for more than 60 organizations. Though her clients tend to be small businesses and nonprofits, some of her business clients have been large companies and institutions and include Home Depot, Cleveland Clinic, Regent University, University of Massachusetts, George Washington University, and the College of William & Mary.

James works with an average of about 40 companies a year. Local small businesses in Hampton Roads include Top Coat Nails LLC, Word Roots Tutoring & Literacy Innovation Center, which are both in York County, and Quality Built Exteriors based out of Chesapeake, in addition to others.

"Quality Built Exteriors is one of my biggest clients, and they do a lot of work on the Peninsula," said James. "I write their blog, so I've become exceptionally knowledgeable about siding, roofing, concrete, pavers, and fire pits."

James interviews the owner for copy material and often weaves her own experiences throughout the stories. As a homeowner, she's personally handled various home projects throughout the years; as a writer, she's ecstatic she can share her trial-and-error knowledge with others.

"The owner of Quality Built Exteriors trusts my product 100 percent," said James. "A lot of times, he gives me carte blanche. As a creative person, it's heaven. I've written all sorts of fun stuff for his blog."

The entrepreneur dedicates a lot of her free time to her community in York County.

"I don't work 40 hours a week, and that's intentional so that I can have time to spend in my community," said James. She's worked with local elementary, middle, and high schools teaching students how to interview with potential employers through mock interviews and has also spoken at entrepreneurship classes.

For the past five years, James has volunteered with York County School Division's Extend Program and shares her tips on print advertising, the basics of layout and color choices, and image location.

"It's amazing because these kids are so smart and pick it up so fast," she said. "I teach the exact same content to business owners through marketing seminars for small businesses, and it's funny because the kids sometimes pick it up much faster than the adults do."

James was named as one of Inside Business Magazine's "Top 40 Under 40" business leaders in 2018. She joked that she was 40 years of age by the time the award ceremony took place and modestly takes credit for her accomplishment.

"The closer you are to 40, the more likely you are to receive the award," said James. "Most people haven't done much by age 22."

James said she genuinely cares about the success of other local businesses.

“I’ve learned so much about economic development through working with the county,” said James. She often refers people to other businesses in the area if her plate is full. She’s all about giving her competition a foot in the door.

“It’s good for our community,” said James. “The more successful our other businesses are, the more businesses will want to open here, which ultimately improves our quality of life and real estate values because there’s more amenities to offer. It’s all so interconnected. If you start being selfish or lazy, it’s going to come back and bite you somewhere down the line.”

For more information on Creative Copy & Design, visit its [website](#) or call 757-660-3889.