

# CONTENT

*Silicon Valley's Innovative and Creative Culture*



**DIRTBAG DAN**

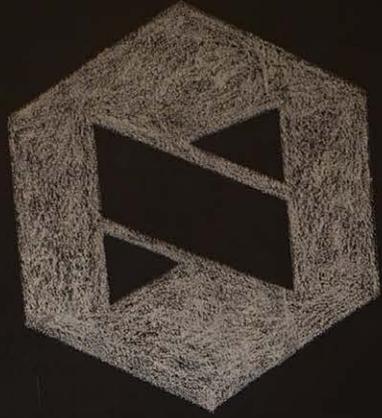
*From Battle Rapper to Comedian*

**RIDGE VINEYARDS | JAVASCRIPT | MOON EXPRESS | SPUR SANJOSE | THE CATAMOUNT**



**AUGMENTED REALITY COVER**  
with PhotoBloom AR





**“THE CLIENT GETS REALLY EXCITED  
WHEN THEY SEE THEY’RE BEING  
THE CREATIVES TOO.”**

*—Ali Tassavor*

# NIKALABS

## Agency

NIKALABS.COM

instagram: *nikalabs\_agency*

**A**li Tassavor, founder of the San Jose–based creative agency Nikalabs, describes web design as “a hobby that became a career.”

Born in Iran, Tassavor moved to the US in 1998 to attend San Jose State University. It being the height of the early dot-com boom, he was eager to familiarize himself with web design. Instead, he studied machine information systems. “There wasn’t really a web design major,” he explains. “I was interested in web and digital things, but everything I learned was basically on my own. So the major didn’t really help.”

He learned enough on his own to get steady freelance work, which he did on the side for years while taking on a variety of jobs in the startup world. Finally, in 2010, after the company he was working for was bought out by Disney, he decided to become his own boss and turn his side hustle into a full-time commitment.

The one-man operation soon expanded from simple web design projects to more complex branding and advertising campaigns, and Nikalabs was born. As the company grew, they opened a small office in Campbell. This past January, after a recent boom in projects and a need to hire more employees, they moved to downtown San Jose.

“We doubled the size of the company within six months—we went from five people to ten,” Tassavor says. “A few of the things we recently launched were in the enterprise level size; it got us on the map. We’re getting a lot of good projects that we’re interested in. We’re getting contacted by companies, and we’re surprised they’re reaching out to us. For the first time, we submitted works to the ADDY Awards, and we won a few.”

One of the additions is Ayman EshaghPour as the new creative director, bringing experience with global agencies and a creative background to the company. “His background is creative and mine

is digital, so we make a good combination,” says Tassavor, who’s also excited about the diversity of his team, which has a mix of backgrounds from around the world. “Now we have people on the team who are really focused on branding and messaging, so we have a full-service agency,” he says. “We can help companies from branding to websites, apps, and digital marketing.”

Today, Nikalabs is attracting a lot of local companies, which is how Tassavor prefers it. “I would say 95 percent of our clients are in the Bay Area. We love the face-to-face interactions.” Nikalabs tackles projects a bit differently than other agencies. The client is involved throughout the entire development process. “Everybody collaborates: the client, team, and us,” explains Tassavor. “We’ve seen that doing two- to three-hour workshops with the client speeds up the whole process. The client gets really excited when they see they’re being the creatives too. We’re not the only ones. Everyone is a creative.” Nikalabs’ process is collaboration in its most basic form.

The formula seems to be working. As Nikalabs continues to grow its portfolio—from small, local construction companies to Silicon Valley startups to huge national brands like FedEx—their collaborative style brings both visual beauty and technical expertise to the final products. They offer a full suite of creative solutions, including strategic branding and positioning, all kinds of advertising, and even things like food packaging.

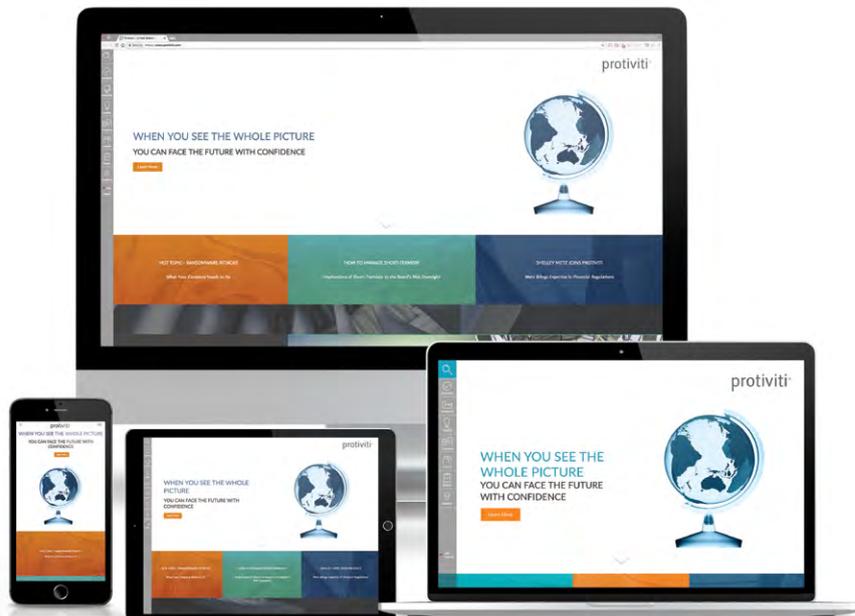
“We’re really optimistic and excited about this year; things have been going great. We love the space that we moved into downtown. It has a super nice backyard. It has helped us a lot, both internally and outside. People come and check out the space, and they see the creative environment. It’s exciting times for us.”

**G**

Written by NATHAN ZANON Photography by DANIEL GARCIA



# Zoolack





*William Quan | Mitchell Morrison | Ayman EshaghPour | Elahab Tassavor | Ali Tassavor | Amir Shobeiri*



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