

Kolbeco and Inlandesign merge, expanding regional reach and presence

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Long-time Edwardsville-based graphic design firm Inlandesign and Kolbeco, a St. Louis brand media agency, announced a merger in December 2022. Moving forward, the merged firms will operate under the Kolbeco name while incorporating the longstanding design legacy of Inlandesign.

A fixture in the region since 1976, Inlandesign established itself as a go-to agency for an endless number of marketing campaigns and designs throughout the St. Louis Metro region. AIGA design legend John Celuch established the firm with the philosophy that “good design is good business.” John grew Inlandesign over a span of nearly four decades. John’s son Adam joined the firm in 2002, becoming principal in 2012.

Teaming with Kolbeco, a brand media agency, expands Inlandesign’s presence in the St. Louis region but also delivers a greater depth of expertise and perspective which leads to building effective, holistic marketing campaigns that impact clients’ businesses. Adam Celuch has assumed the role of Kolbeco’s Senior Art Director, adding his creative expertise in digital, video and print media to the team.

The two firms have collaborated on client projects for many years, which allows for a seamless transition following the merger. The newly combined company will continue operating as Kolbeco, with St. Louis-area offices in St. Charles County, Mo., and Edwardsville, Ill. Kolbeco also has an office in La Crosse, Wis., and team members located in Greenville, S.C., and Turkey, N.C.

“Adam has been a great designer for Inlandesign. Merging with Kolbeco will provide more marketing resources for the Metro East,” said Carolyn Green, president of C. Green and Associates, Inc. (CGA), a marketing strategy firm that launched from the Inlandesign building on Main Street in Edwardsville.

Green noted that she has always been able to count on Celuch for cutting-edge design solutions. A recent project Celuch did for CGA was the logo, branding and initial website design for a cryptocurrency start-up called CoinProphet, which sold for \$10 million this spring.

“I think Adam Celuch is probably the best designer on this side of the river, possibly in the Metro area,” Green



Scott Kolbe, left, and Adam Celuch, right, have joined forces with the recently announced merger of their two firms into the St. Louis region brand media agency known as Kolbeco. Celuch’s former firm had established much visibility in the Metro region since Adam’s father and firm founder John Celuch started the graphic design firm in 1976 under the moniker of Inlandesign. (Courtesy Inlandesign/Kolbeco)

said. “His work on my client CoinProphet’s marketing materials helped them secure a 10-million-dollar sale last spring. The cryptocurrency startup was only about 18 months-old; Adam was creating everything from scratch.”

Inlandesign has had long-running contracts with award-winning St. Louis businesses from family restaurants to the region’s largest construction firms. Their designs can be found on logos, signs, websites, lamp posts and ads for hundreds of companies and organizations in Missouri as well as around the Metro East. In Southwestern Illinois, their most recognizable design work includes for 1818 Chophouse & Offshore, 222 Artisan Bakery, the City of Edwardsville, St. Louis Regional Airport, and the Salute to Steel sculpture in Madison.

Environmental graphics for Cahokia Mounds, as well as for the Lincoln sites and other historic preservations in the tri-state area can also be found in Inlandesign’s impressive portfolio of work. They were selected as designers for a number of centennial exhibits from A.G. Edwards and Ameren to Wheatley YWCA. The firm’s designs have raised millions of dollars for the Edwardsville

YMCA, Allison’s Hope cancer research, and community development efforts.

“For nearly 50 years, Inlandesign has partnered with marketing and PR professionals on a project-to-project basis,” said Celuch. “By merging with Kolbeco we now have the ability to provide a multi-dimensional approach with a cohesive team of dedicated professionals who care about their clients as much as we care about ours. Kolbeco’s ability to adapt in today’s challenging business environment was a key factor in finalizing this merger.”

“Inlandesign holds an amazing reputation for its award-winning creativity in design not only for marketing campaigns, but also for its influence in environmental design, art, photography, architecture, and many other visual mediums present in the community,” said Scott Kolbe, president of Kolbeco. “We have always respected their work and have enjoyed our collaboration over the years. Welcoming Adam and Inlandesign clients to Kolbeco was a natural fit.”

As a brand media firm, Kolbeco focuses on an integrated approach to all campaigns, leveraging the right mix of tactical solutions to reach each client’s



The former Celuch firm known as Inlandesign created the design concept for the Madison, Ill. sculpture, “Salute to Steel.” (Courtesy Inlandesign/Kolbeco)



Former Inlandesign’s Adam Celuch created this portfolio of work for Carolyn Green, president of C. Green and Associates, Inc. (CGA) and her client, cryptocurrency start-up CoinProphet, which sold for \$10 million this spring. (Courtesy Inlandesign/Kolbeco)

goals. The firm’s proprietary 490 Factor™ is a four-phased model of building and managing marketing campaigns, beginning with the creation of the brand story and supporting materials, activities to drive the appropriate audience to the story, engaging the audience at each touchpoint of the experience, and most importantly, analyzing and adjusting results to optimize the marketing investment.

West Star Aviation celebrates 75 years of aviation heritage milestone

IBJ staff report

West Star Aviation is celebrating 75 years of aviation heritage this year. Many people know the West Star Aviation name, as the company has become one of the top MRO service providers in the industry. What many might not know is the long lineage of the brand and how the roots of the organization reach back 75 years. Interestingly, it is a story of two brands, operating at times in parallel, but destined to converge.

For proper perspective, it helps to go back to the very beginning. In 1947, a small aviation company was founded in East Alton, Ill., at what is now St. Louis Regional Airport (KALN). In 1987, along with an ownership change, came a new name – Premier Air Center. Premier Air Center steadily built a strong reputation for technical expertise and personalized service in the maintenance and refurbishment of corporate aircraft.

Meanwhile, in 1952, a company called Monarch Aviation was founded at Walker

Field (KGJT) in Grand Junction, Colo. Monarch had similarly built a strong reputation in aircraft sales in the early days. Monarch began the transformation of the company from aircraft sales and service into a top-rated business aircraft maintenance and refurbishment facility.

Then in 2004, the principals of Premier Air Center acquired West Star Aviation’s Grand Junction operation. This acquisition effectively combined two of the industry’s top full-service MRO organizations at the time.

Principals at the time chose to continue with the West Star Aviation name and the company embarked on a pattern of planned, aggressive growth and soon added a full-service location in Chattanooga, Tenn.(KCHA), as well as Perryville, Mo. (KPCD), making a total of 4 full-service locations along with several smaller satellite locations across the country.

This modern version of West Star Aviation has continued its aggressive growth initiatives by following up with other strategic acquisitions

that included Avant Aerospace and Dallas Aeronautical Services.

The present-day West Star Aviation represents the blending of these industry-renowned aviation service companies and the focus to build on and improve the synergies that resulted from the acquisition. Strong technical expertise, experienced employees, and attention to detail, along with a constant focus on customer service and satisfaction, remain the staples of the West Star Aviation philosophy.

“Dedication to our original philosophies results in a company that fosters technical expertise, encourages the personal and professional development of our employees and places high value on attention to detail in every aspect of our business,” said Debi Cunningham, vice president of marketing at West Star Aviation. “This means a constant focus on customer service and complete satisfaction that is engrained in the very fiber of West Star Aviation, and we are proud to recognize this milestone,” Cunningham continued.

As an industry-leading MRO provider,

West Star is proud to have been voted the #1 Preferred MRO for eight consecutive years from 2014-2021 in Professional Pilot Magazine’s annual PRASE Survey.

West Star Aviation specializes in the repair and maintenance of airframes, engines and APUs, avionics installations and repair, major modifications, interior refurbishment, exterior paint, accessory services and parts.

In addition to its primary facilities in East Alton, Ill.; Grand Junction, Colo.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; and Perryville, Mo., West Star Aviation also maintains satellite facilities at Chicago Executive Airport in Chicago; Centennial Airport in Denver; Conroe-North Houston Regional Airport in Houston, Texas; and Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport in Minneapolis, Minn. The company provides complete FBO services for transient aircraft at its East Alton and Grand Junction facilities, as well as AOG/MRT services nationwide.

For more information visit www.weststaraviation.com or call 800-922-2421.