

Welcome to
joyful plate®
food beverage
lifestyle
brand
management



Founded in 2010



I'm Michelle Lawton, founder of **joyful plate** - brand consultant in the consumer products and hospitality world – particularly in the space where indulgence meets **health & wellness**.



Who we are

We love working with clients to help bring joy to the table.

- **Refresh** and revitalize your brand
- **Create** imaginative new products and marketing content
- **Research** ideas with consumers
- **Design** packaging and digital communications
- **Lead cross functional teams** to strong business growth



We help position and reposition brands for growth

FUEL



Convenient whole foods
eaten as mini meals.

COOK



Empower cooks in their
kitchens.

CHILL



Take time to relax,
recover & reboot.

PLAY



Lift our spirits
Indulge our senses.

From Insight to Impact: building stronger brands

Focus groups, ethnographies, one-on-one sessions and quantitative research on subjects from food and wine, pet food, cold and flu, diabetes, weight loss, smoking cessation, and vitamins/neutraceuticals.

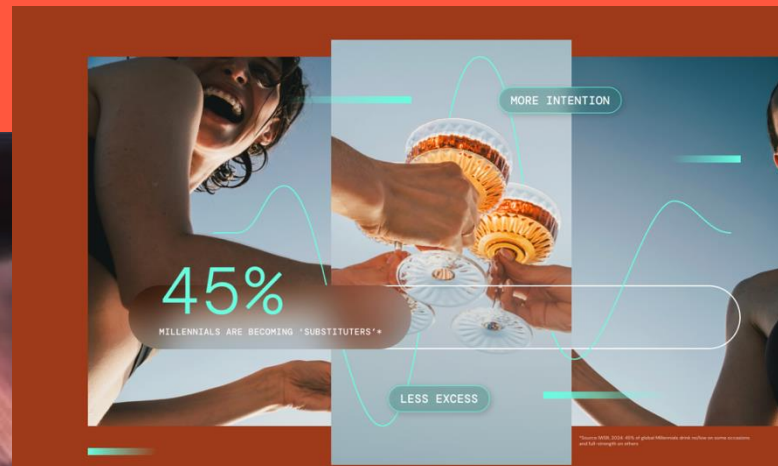
Brand Strategy (Mission, vision, and values), Brand Positioning and Promise, Brand Personality and Tone of Voice, Brand Naming for Package, Digital Design and Campaignable Ideas (freelance to agency).



Guardian blind tasting in May found that 4 out of 10 participants—including a self-described Guinness enthusiast—couldn't correctly identify Guinness 0.0 versus the original.

“

The brands winning so far in non-alcoholic space feel like a natural extension of the parent brand,



KEY INSIGHT

Excess Is Out. Intention Is In. How can brands navigate shifting consumer appetites toward moderation?



Tasting is believing.

joyfulplate tasting parties

“

*I want to be part
of this mindful
movement*



KEY INSIGHT

**A better way to enjoy
everyday.**



Recent Case Studies

Refreshing Better-for-You Snacking for Gen Z

KEY INSIGHT

We are human.
We LOVE the BINGE.



taking my new year's resolution to
skateboard seriously this year

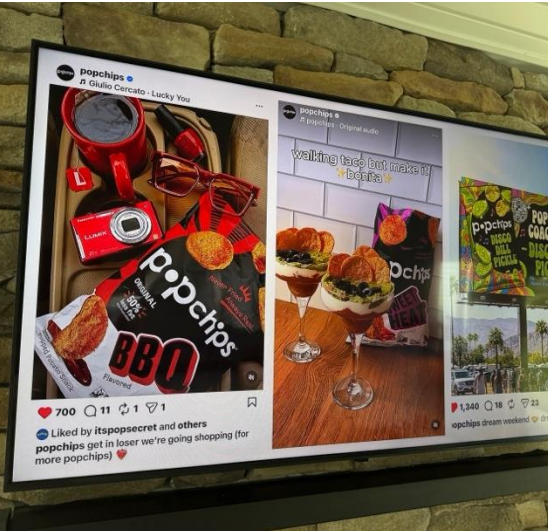


KEY INSIGHT

Snacking can mean
self-love and self care.

2026: Deepen understanding of the better-for-you snack category and Gen Z consumers through expertly moderated joyfulplate tasting parties, translating real-world feedback into actionable brand and marketing strategy. Explore culturally relevant moments GIRL DINNER, etc.











Putting a Legacy Winery On The Map

Eight month consulting assignment to elevate Robert Hall Winery, Paso Robles' largest winery. Crafted strategic plan to enhance portfolio quality and margins and enhanced winery visitation experience. Result: Winning business/game plan for 2019/2020. Competitive analysis, brand positioning, storytelling to create unique point of difference.



CLASSIC CONVENTION

ARTISANAL CRAFT

ENTERTAINING ESCAPE

LUXURY ICON



• WELCOME TO •
THE GOOD LIFE. WELL-EARNED.



Revolutionizing Rice



Co-Creating the Future of Kitchen Tools with Chef Experts



Chef Trend Research
Back of the house tools



2024: Consumer research and recruit with Chain Restaurant QSR Chefs for mass brand at retail new in food service.

Refreshing The Freezer with Plant Based

*joyfulplate vision



Strategic advisor to Sam Dennigan, founder of Strong Roots® IE/UK (2017-2023), a leading Irish B-Corp offering innovative plant-based foods. Spearheaded five-year marketing and financial strategy, facilitating U.S. expansion into 3,000+ stores including Walmart, Kroger, and Wegmans. McCain (CA) minority stake in 2021.

Contemporize legacy brand



Family-run business since 1925. Minnesota Mom-Owned, Women Owned, Sister Run. Made locally in Midwest with only a few simple, pure ingredients, simply made, naturally delicious dairy foods.



Contemporize the brand with the new verbal and visual tool kit and digital campaign. Three year relationship 2021-2024, trade marketing focus.

Brand Guidelines: Target



It's aspirational yet approachable



Inspiring-everyday exotic



Accessible-easy for to go picnic



Made with Love-perfect sauces for a school night



Convenient-frozen fresh



Adventurous- lemon zest



Six month engagement developing brand guidelines and creative briefs for every product category of Target's Good & Gather launch 2019.

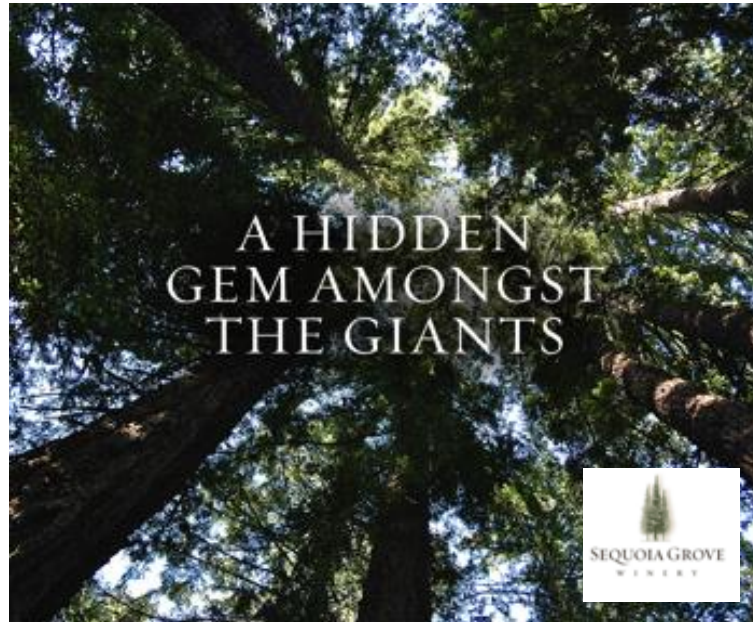
Strategy to Creative Excellence



Strategy to Creative Excellence



Strategy to Creative Excellence



@joyfulplate in the media: trade show trend reports

Food & Fashion: A Pre-Fancy Food Show Premise
Mass Market has been strutting style for some time now. Here are just a few brands that dress to express with design and advertising.



sfa summer
fancy food
show
June 29 – July 1, 2025 • Javits Center • NYC

joyful
plate

@joyfulplate trend reports: Modern General Store



An extended part of the team

Concierge consulting led by me and my extended team of experts.

A client leader who can drive success internally as well as work nimbly with outside agencies and strategic partners.

Strong and respected network and talented extended team of researchers, designers and content creators to help express a brand's truth.

More here: <https://michellelawton.com/#testimonials>



Let's work together!

Join us at any point in your process:
Project, retainer or day workshops



or



Business
Assessment,
Analysis, Cultural
Trend Research



Brand Positioning,
Architecture, Pack
Design Strategy &
Research



Visual/Verbal Tool
Kit, Campaignable
Ideas



Consumer Validation,
Qualitative,
Quantitative Ad tests



Future, Innovation,
Concept
Development, Trend
work (Culture,
Chef/Ingredients)



Strategies for Go to
Market, Digital
Design, Social Media

Associations & Corporations



WSET
WINE & SPIRIT
EDUCATION TRUST



WEST SIDE CAMPAIGN
AGAINST HUNGER



Design Agency Experience

Brand Management
Corporate Experience

2
2
8



Les Dames d'Escoffier
New York



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATION

MARKET RESEARCH
RIVA
TRAINING INSTITUTE





joyfulplate
tasting parties

Real Conversations · Real Consumers
Real Insights · Real Fast

FAST!
CASUAL.
FUN!
INFORMATIVE!

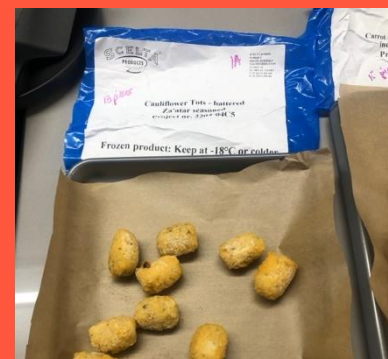


Who It's For

Brands that want to engage directly with consumers to uncover how and when their products fit into everyday lives.

- Reactions to brand taste and function: flavor, aroma, texture vs. competition
- Reactions to packaging design, structure, and communications
- Purchase motivations and usage habits — how respondents approach cooking vs. eating out/takeout, the endless places food is available
- Trend spotting, digital/social media practices, and brainstorm and think tanks.





About the Founder

Michelle Lawton is an entrepreneur, brand marketing expert and trend-spotting specialist. She is the founder of Joyful Plate, a brand strategy and insights consultancy helping food, beverage and lifestyle brands grow through strategy, consumer research and design.

With 15 years in corporate brand management and more than a decade as a solopreneur, Michelle combines strategic rigor with an entrepreneurial ability to work nimbly. She has led iconic brands including Marchesi Antinori, Krug Champagne, Campbell's and Ciao Bella, with consulting experience spanning grocery to restaurant, pickles to pastry.

Michelle serves on the board of Les Dames d'Escoffier New York, a nonprofit empowering women in hospitality that has awarded more than \$2 million in scholarships to date. A longtime advocate for food security, she has volunteered with West Side Campaign Against Hunger for 15 years.

She is the author of *Moderating A Love Affair With Food* (2023), an advocate for mindful eating and drinking, and holds the WSET Level 3 Advanced Certificate in Wines. She shares food, wine and cultural trends through @joyfulplate on Instagram and Substack.



At the center of the conversation: Author Moderating a Love Affair with Food Tips to Mindful Eating & Drinking (2023)



We offer a complete approach

Our team collaborates to bring the best strategic/creative work to our clients to solve business problems and help their brands shine.

Thank you for this opportunity to partner with you-let's **make this a great experience!**



FOOD BEVERAGE BRANDING & EDUCATION