THOM McELROY, ‘85
Retired
Volcom, Inc. & McElroy Communications

Thom McElroy has brought the youth market to the masses through his creative design and advertising approach. McElroy Designs was formed in 1989 servicing national and international clients. In 1994 McElroy Designs evolved into a full service agency, and a name change to McElroy Communications. Thom has been the force in developing branding for Volcom, X Box, Activision, Vans, Quiksilver and Taco Bell. Thom sold the agency to Foote, Cone, and Belding in 1999, the 5th largest advertising agency in the world. McElroy: FCB became a major marketing force not just in Orange County but worldwide.

Thom left FCB in August 2002 to join forces with Volcom, a youth lifestyle label that he co-founded in 1991. He spent time as Volcom’s Chief Brand Officer before semi-retiring. Semi-retirement did not last long. He consulted with O’Neill Sportswear as their Brand Manager for a period before accepting the position of SVP of Marketing. His knowledge of brand building and grassroots marketing helped grow O’Neill’s business by 50% over two years.

When Volcom went public in 2005, Thom went on a leave of absence that eventually led to his retirement. For the past nine years he has consulted with many new companies and young CEOs and invested in several emerging brands. Thom currently sits on The Campanile Foundation Board of Directors and chairs the Alumni Engagement Committee. He also mentors at the Lavin Entrepreneurship Management Center and is involved in the School of Business, the Zahn Center of Engineering and The College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts at SDSU.