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Get creative with your resume

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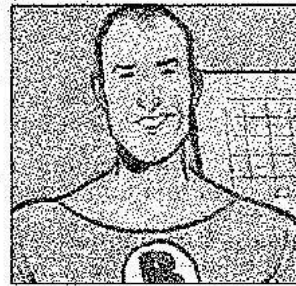
Tom McAlister, a marketing strategist, said he may not have gotten his most recent job in Los Angeles because of Brand Man, his comic book resume. But it sure helped with "cutting through the clutter and getting onto people's radar."

Brand Man is a four-page comic outlining McAlister's "superhuman ... ability to connect brands to customers."

How did he get the idea? He was frustrated trying to squeeze info on his experience, brainpower, passion and sense of humor into three paragraphs in a cover letter.

"After 20 minutes, I threw up my hands," he said in an e-mail. "I was like, 'I reject this format! There's got to be a better way.'"

He wondered if there was "a fun,



Tom McAlister's Brand Man was a unique spin on a resume.

visual way to tell a story with pictures ... And before I got to the end of that thought, I had it. Comic book resume!"

Working with an illustrator, McAlister launched Brand Man to the Rescue in January.

Of course, he also has a standard-format resume and pointed out that he's in an industry

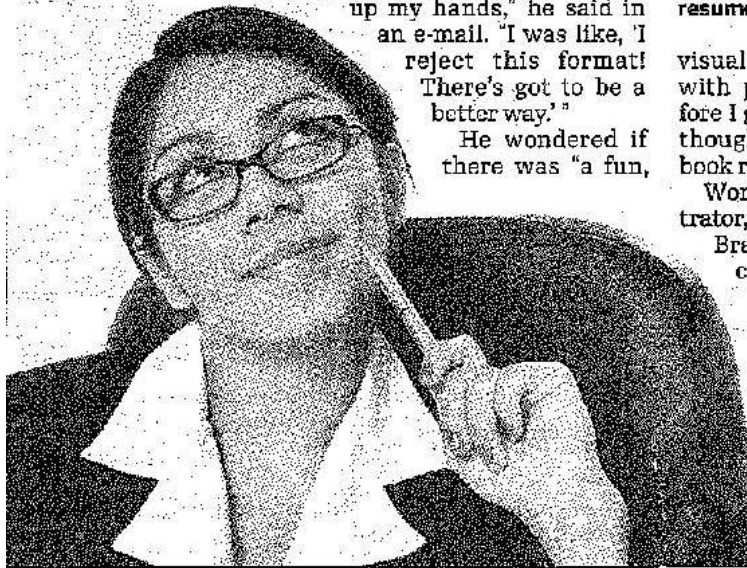
in which out-of-the-box thinking is valued.

"I'd say that applicants should definitely use common sense before trying to go this far out of the box," he said, "especially while pursuing jobs in more traditional industries."

He told of one idea he's heard — along with a resume, sending the human resources manager a coffee mug and note saying, "Hi, I think I'd be great at this job. Can I buy you a cup of coffee to talk it over?"

"They'll either meet with you or they won't," McAlister said. "But I guess that's where I come down on this one: I'd rather have somebody remember me and politely decline to employ me than have them never know who I am in the first place."

Patricia Kitchen is a Newsday staff writer.



If you're applying for a job where out-of-the-box thinking is valued, start thinking of ways you can get creative with your resume.