

RECOGNITION

SURFING IN TEXAS

Every web designer has a favoured method for planning a new site. Take this example: "We play some sexy saxophone. You stroke our chest rug, talking all crazy about how you just want someone who can tell the world why you're different, why you're special. Then the room catches fire, and the magic starts to happen."

Ahem. The pitch on Fracture's website probably won't appeal to everyone, but if you're that kind of client you're in decent company: Charlie's, Citta and Workshop, plus international brands such as Mini BMW. And at this year's South by Southwest conference in Austin, Texas, Fracture won the Interactive Web Award for its work for Kiwi architects Jasmx.

Nick Fracture started the Auckland-based company out of design school in 2001. Managing director James McKee joined shortly thereafter, and the duo has since created a legacy in Flash design. The team's design process is straightforward and in-depth. They first spend a couple of weeks asking questions, researching the organisation and getting inside the heads of the client (with or without the saxophone).

From there, the design team takes over, and Fracture says the designers are the source of the company's continued innovation and success. For example, he tells the story of when Mini Cabrio asked the team to create a web-based video advert to promote their new car. Unfortunately, Mini had no video and the car wasn't scheduled to debut in New Zealand for several months. Rather than forfeit the project, the crew compiled around 10,000 still shots of the Mini and spliced them into a quirky mini-film. "We pretty much didn't sleep for two weeks but did what it took to make it work," he says.

Keep an eye out for Fracture's upcoming projects, including the brand creation for two new beer labels out of Fiji. Their golf carts featuring bar taps with mobile cooling units are sure to be a hit.

— Laura Westphal



PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMON YOUNG