

# Statement



October 23, 2017

## Visual Connections for Sale

After ten years running Visual Connections LLC, co-owners Deborah Free and Edward Leigh have decided to make it available for acquisition.

Visual Connections runs a unique format of expo for users of visual media to meet stock agencies, artist reps, production companies, clearance and other service providers; to learn about the business of sourcing and using visual media; and to network. The events calendar has comprised an annual fall event in New York, and usually a spring event alternating between Chicago and other cities, including Toronto and Boston. These expos have garnered a loyal following, with many people returning year after year.

Visual Connections also hosts the industry's most comprehensive directory of suppliers, containing over 1,200 companies, and a database of over 10,000 buyers in North America. The back-end system is a custom-built, web-based CRM (customer relationship management) system that integrates event bookings and registrations, payments, mailings, and directory listings.

The owners are offering a full handover of the business as a going concern, with documentation, training and introductions to provide a smooth transfer. An acquisition within the next few months would allow the new owner to continue the event cycle in 2018.

Visual Connections has a vital role in promoting effective and legal use of photography, footage and illustration to enhance the communication of news, information, brands, products and services. Its potential client base comprises, on the one hand, professional and pro-am photographers, videographers, illustrators, their reps and agents; and, on the other, designers, publishers, producers, creative and art directors, editors and researchers.

There is enormous growth potential, through an expansion of the events program, in North America and globally, to help content and service suppliers develop more new relationships, to educate more visual media users, and to promote talent throughout the industry.

The prospectus for the sale of Visual Connections is available on request at [info@visualconnections.com](mailto:info@visualconnections.com) or +1 585 768 7880 (Deborah in USA) or +44 1223 312 377 (Edward in UK).

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## *A personal message from Deborah Free and Edward Leigh*

We have greatly enjoyed running events in New York, Chicago, Toronto and Boston. We would like to thank our many loyal clients, who have exhibited or attended over the years. Our thanks too to the many other people who have helped make the events a success: Joanne Williams, Dee Santana, and Michael Masterson, front of house at our events; Sharon Federico, our designer; Ellen Herbert, our commissioning editor; Lindsey Nicholson, our go-to for almost anything; and Cathy Aron, for coordinating DMLA conferences with our events.

People are surprised to learn that two individuals can organize up to three large events a year, and have other jobs. It's partly because of the way we have automated many complex processes around booking, registration, and compiling print directories.

The Visual Connections brand, contacts, goodwill and CRM system are a powerful base from which a new owner may innovate, perhaps through an expansion of the events program, or offering new educational or marketing opportunities.

Deborah will continue to provide business development consultancy to companies in the industry, but also has plans to start a deli near her home in upstate New York. Anyone who knows Deborah's love of good food, baking and canning will not be surprised.

Edward has plans to start a company specializing in early-stage transport planning and urban design. He has spent the past two years leading a community group in his home town of Cambridge, UK, campaigning for sustainable and integrated transport, and believes he has spotted a business opportunity and a new career.

## *About Visual Connections*

Visual Connections is a marketing services company focused on connecting buyers with suppliers of photography, footage, illustration and other media. The company owners, Deborah Free and Edward Leigh, have over 50 years combined experience in the industry and have run trade fairs, for Picturehouse then Visual Connections, since 2003. They formed Visual Connections – initially as Picturehouse Marketing (US) – in 2008. On October 25<sup>th</sup>, Visual Connections will stage its tenth New York event at the New Yorker hotel.

<http://www.visualconnections.com/>