

Job Description

Job Title:	Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects
Department:	Print + Retail Solutions
Reports To:	Director
Jobs Reporting:	Production Manager Assistant Manager, Production and Business Development Manager, Information Systems Strategy and Integration
Salary Grade:	USG 13
Effective Date:	November 2020

Primary Purpose

The Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects is accountable to the Director, Print + Retail Solutions (P+RS) for:

- Developing and leading strategic initiatives to improve the long-term financial viability of the department by increasing campus sales and reducing costs through efficiencies;
- Leadership in the strategic oversight of P+RS' information systems and technical infrastructure, the W Print Team, and direct-to-campus sales channels; and
- Speaking and acting on behalf of the Director and the department as needed.

The incumbent identifies and leverages opportunities and partnerships to position the areas under their oversight as the trusted source for printing and retail needs, by building strong working relationships with campus partners and the higher education industry, and providing excellent customer service.

Key Accountabilities

Leadership

- Contributes to goal-setting and strategic planning for the department as a member of the P+RS Leadership Team, and implements those plans and goals within their area
- Assists in the creation of and adherence to P+RS' standards of excellent customer service
- Ensures effective communication of departmental direction and initiatives to direct reports by establishing transparency through shared P+RS goal setting
- Proactively participates in P+RS project prioritization and reviews it on an ongoing basis, while taking the initiative to make recommendations to the Director with respect to potential customer service and conversion improvements to increase sales and profitability
- Models the values of the P+RS department and the priorities of the Leadership Team in interactions with internal and external partners

Effective Sales Performance

- Establishes new lines of revenue through the establishment of relationships with off-campus entities from within the broader post-secondary sector and beyond
- Leverages P+RS' position as an innovative leader in campus retailing and printing to form advantageous partnerships with other campuses
- Develops and implements processes and procedures through shared team planning to ensure that strategic goals are realized and business targets are met
- Working closely with the Manager, Accounting and Financial Analysis, establishes targets and evaluates financial performance by applying analytical skills to assess revenue, margins, expenses, pricing, promotions and inventory management
- Develops and implements strong, cohesive promotional strategies and marketing campaigns

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- For campus-facing sales channels, takes responsibility as needed for managing relationships with vendors, including negotiating prices, rebates and discounts that are favourable for the University of Waterloo, P+RS and customers
- Researches emerging technologies and opportunities in higher education
- Responds quickly, thoroughly and professionally to requests for quotations and information

Effective Operations

- Identifies opportunities for operational efficiency across P+RS through proper human resource planning and management, and effective allocation of financial and operational resources
- Establishes and maintains effective and timely processes and response times by liaising with on- and off-campus partners
- Prepares and administers annual budgets, and recommends, implements and administers operating policies and procedures
- Proactively leads the strategic adoption of up-to-date technology resources to ensure P+RS' customers' needs are met effectively
- Takes the lead on RFP processes for IS and other technology as needed, including P+RS' production equipment, along with ensuring effective implementation, communication and ongoing management
- In coordination with the Marketing team, develops strategies to build customer loyalty and strengthen the P+RS' loyalty program
- Implements systems and processes to establish and maintain records for the operating unit

Direct-to-Campus Sales Development

- Leveraging deep understanding of the campus community, the incumbent seeks out and develops new lines of business for P+RS
- Through the identification of key decision makers and influencers, prioritizes the establishment of long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with campus units, cementing P+RS as the first choice for campus units when they need goods or services
- Wherever possible, ensures that P+RS is seen as a valued strategic partner for the campus, able to serve the community in ways external vendors cannot
- Works with the Director, P+RS and the Manager, Business Development & Marketing to develop new, client-focused programs and products that are financially viable and profitable
- Provides strategic guidance to the Manager, Marketing and Business Development with respect to departmental growth strategies
- Through effective supervision of the Assistant Manager, Production and Business Development, forges relationships with campus units to become the official campus supplier for printing services and technology products wherever possible
- Create and maintain a network of partners/clients in industry and academia, along with maintaining a reference database of key contacts and business development opportunities for others to reference

Staff Management

- Trains, supervises and mentors direct reports and team members
- Initiates and conducts regular performance conversations and annual reviews with direct reports
- Addresses performance and staffing issues quickly and decisively – and proactively, whenever possible – within their team

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Collaboration

- Interacts regularly with the Leadership Team and all P+RS staff and supports cross-promotion of products and services wherever possible
- Establishes and maintains strong partnerships and relationships with units throughout the university and the affiliated colleges
- Establishes and maintains strong collegial and productive relationships with colleagues at other post-secondary institutions, sharing best practices and developing solutions to shared issues within the sector
- Actively participates in industry groups and associations (e.g., CCRA, CSC) to help shape the business environment for the University of Waterloo and other Canadian post-secondary institutions
- Represents P+RS on various campus committees related to the University's mission, strategic plan and institution-wide service offerings, as opportunities arise

Customer Service

- Commits to positive interactions with all internal and external customers, and provides appropriate level of assistance regardless of situation or location
- Ensures that all customer inquiries are handled in a professional, timely manner; and in cases when customers should be redirected to other staff, the customer is not left without service

**All employees of the University are expected to follow University and departmental health and safety policy, procedures and work practices at all times. Employees are also responsible for the completion of all health and safety training, as assigned. Employees with staff supervision and/or management responsibilities will ensure that assigned staff abide by the above, and actively identify, assess and correct health and safety hazards, as required.*

Required Qualifications

Education

- University degree in Business, Information Technology or a related discipline; equivalent combination of education and experience will be considered
- Education and/or professional experience in retail management, business analysis information systems and/or project management is preferred

Experience

- Minimum seven years of supervisory and progressively responsible leadership experience in a business or post-secondary environment
- Minimum seven years of experience negotiating product purchases, preferably in an academic setting, with accountability for meeting revenue, margin and pricing targets
- Experience and demonstrated comfort using databases, spreadsheets and new technologies

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- Understanding of banking industry security, including PCI/PADSS compliance and integrated point-of-sale technologies
- The ability to source, assess, implement and administer enterprise level software applications
- Broad knowledge of existing and emerging trends in information systems and technology
- Knowledge and experience with operating systems and hardware required to support the business requirements of P+RS stably and reliably through all business cycles
- Strong entrepreneurial aptitude with a capacity to engage in revenue-generating activities
- Critical thinking, strong planning and organizational skills, proven analytical and decision-making abilities and a thorough knowledge of the P+RS and University of Waterloo culture and decision-making processes
- Demonstrated leadership ability, as well as negotiation and persuasion skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Interpersonal skills and relationship-building ability, with a proven track record in creating long-term business partnerships
- Change agent with proven ability to navigate complex projects effectively, collaboratively and

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- Familiarity with relevant University of Waterloo policies, procedures, and guidelines including Health and Safety, Staff Employment, Conflict Management and Human Rights, and AODA requirements is preferred
- Intermediate skill with MS Office suite

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Beyond connections with P+RS colleagues, the incumbent has regular contact with campus groups and off-campus suppliers to maintain and develop positive customer relationships and beneficial vendor relations. The incumbent also maintains excellent relationships with colleagues from other institutions to gather best practices and share information related to providing the best service possible to the campus community.
- **Level of Responsibility:** For the areas under their oversight as outlined above, the Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives and Special Projects is responsible for the overall financial and service performance, and for meeting the strategic goals and the revenue, profitability and efficiency targets set for their areas of responsibility.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position has decision-making authority for the items outlined above.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** This position requires exertion of physical sensory effort resulting in slight fatigue, strain or risk of injury. Some lifting, bending and stretching is required from time to time, in order to move/display equipment and products for sale.
- **Working Environment:** This position works in a typical retail store and office environment. There will sometimes be unusual hours or schedules, extended weekend hours, or weekday extended hours with varying volumes of work at different times of the year. Some travel may be required.