

Job Description

Job Title:	Associate Director, Digital Communications
Department:	Marketing & Strategic Initiatives (ORG 5380)
Reports To:	Associate Vice-President, Marketing & Strategic Initiatives
Jobs Reporting:	Communications Coordinator/Community Engagement
Salary Grade:	USG 12
Effective Date:	June 2017

Primary Purpose

This position is accountable to the Associate Vice-President, Marketing & Strategic Initiatives (AVP, MSI) and is responsible to provide leadership and set best practices in digital communications across the university and its core social media channels.

The Associate Director, Digital Communications will serve as a leading expert across the University on social marketing and provide technical expertise and guidance to University stakeholders on matters related to social media, digital advertising and digital analytics - continually review or recommend new and emerging platforms – being aware of best practices and suitability to the institution’s key audiences.

The Associate Director will work as part of a cross-functional team of communication professionals responsible for marketing campaigns, crisis management, government relations, executive communications, internal communications and media relations, etc.

Key Accountabilities

Digital Marketing, Communications and Public Relations

- With the AVP, Marketing and Strategic Initiatives, create and implement a multi-platform digital strategy that aligns and supports Waterloo’s overall marketing and communications objectives.
- Ensure social digital strategy effectively supports, amplifies and integrates with other University efforts.
- Work closely with key administrators – including Deans and the President’s Office to ensure an integrated and strategic approach to all aspects of the University’s digital presence.
- Develop and prepare key digital communication messaging, presentation materials and coaching for senior management.
- Lead dissemination of messages and digital/social media traffic between University and key stakeholders including prospective students, government, donors, alumni, and others.
- Serve as point-person with vendors/providers for social media marketing efforts, including paid online media, search engine marketing, interactive marketing, internal/external partnerships, etc.
- Lead University-wide team responsible for strategy, content, design, analytics and maintenance of social media outlets to leverage and manage digital resources strategically and ensure that the UW brand identity, reputations and messages are protected and presented consistently and effectively across all digital platforms.
- Track and report on the impact of strategic aspects of the University’s digital presence.
- Ensure strategy effectively supports, amplifies and integrates with other University efforts.
- Manage the University’s social response to crises and issues.
- Promote high profile and reputation-building events through social media channels.

- Stay current with, champion and support use of industry best practices.
- Create, update and share standardized social media reports as appropriate.
- Regularly analyze and translate data into recommendations and plans for revising and improving future digital campaigns.
- Integrate data related to organic social media campaigns that run parallel to paid media campaigns to ensure a holistic view of the results/ learnings.
- Develop and maintain the University's Social Media Guidelines - educating the community on the guidelines as well as best practices for social media.
- Manage all aspects of Waterloo's social media collaboration tools.
- Monitor and assess digital activity of University competitors, industry as well as emerging technology trends and make recommendations for improvements to the University's strategy and tactics.
- Oversee the deployment of our social strategy refinement to ensure successful use of designed strategies and troubleshoot implementation issues and quality concerns.
- Act as strategic digital lead for key university projects including State of the University Report, Waterloo Innovation Summit, Convocation, Waterloo Magazine, Orientation, Government Visits and others
- Manage University's online response to crises by representing University Relations on multiple crisis communication committees.

Community Engagement

- Oversee the development of a content distribution network by way of social media channels.
- Drive online conversation, both minute-by-minute and in support of campaigns. Engaging the University and broader community through smart, strategic and timely communications.
- Guide other campus units to promote a cohesive and consistent voice for the University, while building shared identity and a sense of community.
- Support and educate colleagues managing other official University social media accounts. Ensure these University accounts contribute effectively to the overall online community and adhere to the brand.
- Develop and maintain an editorial calendar for digital content to increase collaboration among official University feeds.
- Build and maintain influencer relationships and manage external partnerships that amplify the University's reach and reputation.

Content Generation

- Lead the creation of original content including: blog posts, articles, newsletters, communications materials, tweets and posts for various social media channels.
- Create an integrated content strategy and execute this strategy – including a comprehensive content calendar for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and any other emerging/relevant platforms.
- Chair a committee that integrates departments and units generating their own ongoing content.
- Oversee University social media feeds; Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Tumblr, as well as ensuring a presence on new platforms by keeping abreast of emerging social media platforms and trends.
- Ensure that all activities further the digital marketing communications strategy, in support of the University's overall mission, vision, strategic plan and stated priorities.
- Be a thought leader for social media at the University and provide the necessary leadership and support.
- Act as a key point person with vendors, third party apps and agencies for digital marketing efforts.

- Work collaboratively with the Director, Marketing and Brand and others as appropriate on projects involving paid online media search engine marketing, digital partnerships, etc.

Training and Support

- Provide social media leadership, training and support to senior leaders and departments/units to improve their effective use of digital communications channels and tools.
- Develop an active, informed and engaged social media community that values social media best practice in support of the University's goals.
- Help raise the digital competencies of internal staff – develop a short and mid-range plan with specific goals.
- Develop and provide templates and guidance to campus partners for creating digital content and measurement of success.
- Train, mentor and supervise the Communications Coordinator/Community Engagement, ensuring the vision for the University and long-term goals are reached.
- Ensure consistent and cohesive “voice” for the University's core social accounts.

Social Media Monitoring

- Using advanced technology, monitor online communities, student blogs and other various media for content that may harm the University's reputation as well as emerging trends. Report and make recommendations as appropriate to leadership.
- Ensure responsiveness on other platforms as questions/ comments arise. Responses should be timely, and handled with diplomacy - not necessarily adhering to a 9am-5pm schedule.
- Track and measure campaigns, present findings and make recommendations to various stakeholders.
- Ensure that all @mentions and the pertinent #UWaterloo, hashtags are replied to on Twitter, and coordination with other groups on campus, to ensure recruitment questions (in particular) on Facebook are answered.
- A member of the crisis communications and issues management teams.
- Manage the University's social response to crises and issues.

Quality Control

- Ensure excellence and consistency in social media communications.
- Lead the delivery of key institutional messages within social media conversations produced by the University and more broadly across campus.
- Develop and align social media strategies and activities with University and legislated standards, guidelines and policies.

Collaboration and Outreach

- Play a key leadership role in integrating digital communications across all functions in University Relations, while maintaining positive work relationships.
- Work closely with President's Office to ensure strategic requirements of senior-level Social outreach are executed flawlessly and meet planned outcomes.
- Lead other departments enabling them to promote, protect and enhance their reputation, identify social influencers and coordinate actions on all digital channels.
- Maintain strong relationships and continue to build a network of colleagues involved with social media.
- Work collaboratively with the Director, Marketing and Brand to plan and execute digital media buys; including digital advertising, social media advertising, use of digital screens, etc.
- The Associate Director, Digital Communications, is accountable planning and implementing enterprise-wide, multi-platform digital activities that position the University as an institutional and sector thought leader.

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- Partner with internal and external content managers, editors, designers, developers, and other University staff to ensure sites meet both client and institutional needs, align with the brand strategy platform, and meet University web standards.

Managing & Motivating People

- Responsible for the direct supervision of the Communications Coordinator/Community Engagement.
- Recruit, manage and develop MSI co-op students; provide leadership, guidance, support and coaching as required.

Required Qualifications

Education

- University Degree or equivalent combination of education and experience required.

Experience

- 6-10 years of experience in managing social media.
- Demonstrated expertise in the development and implementation of social media plans including use of related content and analysis tools.
- High degree of experience with planning and use of social media channels including YouTube, StumbleUpon, Delicious, Digg, Reddit, Flickr, Forums, Twitter, Wikis, blogs.
- Experience required in management of digital staff/teams.

Knowledge/Skills/Abilities

- A social media expert who maintains a personal mix of participatory expertise from among these channels.
- Discretion to identify risk and opportunities in user-generated content.
- Effective time management skills, ability to multitask, confidence in decision making under pressure.
- Positive energy and attitude, willingness to be “on call” 24/7 and work flexible hours.
- A passion for and commitment to the University of Waterloo and commitment to developing its experience for all stakeholders (including students, faculty and staff, alumni).
- An advanced understanding of digital behavior and the ability to apply these insights to develop better digital experiences.
- Ability to identify and implement social media process related to the development, posting and measurement of content and to make continuous improvements.
- Ability to ensure the strategic and tactical use of social media to leverage our differentiators to enhance the University’s reputation and further inform and engage stakeholders.
- Understand how paid, owned and earned media interact.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and ability to apply key metrics for effective ROI analysis.
- Critical thinking and analytical skills to understand the complex nature of higher education and the issues of concern to stakeholders.
- Effective interpersonal and written communication skills. Ability to quickly produce and distribute quality, thoughtful, creative and engaging content.
- Dedicated to blogging and use of Facebook.
- Understands the power of feed marketing.
- Keen sense of responsive client service.
- Advanced skills in MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint and social media.

Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** Internally interacts with colleagues across the University. Externally the position interacts with the broader community on a global basis and represents the University as the face of social media at key events.

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- **Level of Responsibility:** The Communications Coordinator/Community Engagement reports to the Associate Director, Digital Communications. The incumbent will use their proven ability; extensive experience and understanding of integrated marketing and communications strategies to promote protect and enhance the University's reputation. Within a highly complex institution and a competitive marketplace, the incumbent will leverage digital communications and new technologies in support of the university's strategic priorities. The position is responsible and accountable for effective online communications – both content and community building to achieve specified goals. The position demonstrates a deep understanding of new and emerging media and is expected to bring innovative approaches and new concepts and models to communications programs.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** The incumbent will use sound judgment and discretion in making content decisions (often under tight time pressure) on behalf of the institution. The timeliness and quality of online content contributes to the overall reputation of the University and to achieving the University's goals.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a position operating within an office environment.
- **Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a position exposed to stress and pressure associated with management level responsibilities. Work outside the normal operating hours of the institution can be expected in this role.