#### Trent University LogoEXEMPT JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Communications & Media Relations Officer

**Job Number:** X-289 | VIP: 1027

**Band:** EXEMPT- 6

**Department:** Communications

**Supervisor Title:** Manager, Communications

**Last Reviewed:**  December 5, 2017

#### **Job Purpose:**

Reporting to the Manager, Communications, the Communications & Media Relations Officer is a key member of the Communications and Recruitment & Admissions team, which is responsible for University recruitment and enrolment as well as managing Trent’s reputation. This position is responsible for overseeing the planning and development of internal and external communications supporting the Trent University reputation, brand and overall strategic enrolment management goals of the University and increasing public profile through the development and coordination of a comprehensive national and international Media Relations Strategy. In line with the institution’s positioning and branding, this position takes a lead role in dimensionalizing the Trent story across all media platforms and in the digital realm. As a media and marketing/communications expert, the successful candidate will contribute media and social media expertise to all plans, meetings, and discussions, also overseeing various aspects of marketing materials, publications, presentations, and e-communications.

#### Key Activities:

##### Media Relations

* As the University lead and first point of contact for media relations, prepare and coordinate execution of a Media Relations Strategy as part of the University-wide Marketing Plan for both campuses with clear metrics for tracking and measuring success.
* Proactively seek out, plan, manage, pitch, and execute media opportunities and coverage, and create content for producing/coordinating communications material and events in support of the strategic Marketing & Communications goals to build reputation and awareness of Trent University.
* Conduct quarterly reviews of media coverage, creating a dashboard that tracks metrics, keeps comparator data, sets new goals and allows for adjustments to the plan as required; constantly renew and refresh accurate media lists.
* Conduct daily media scans, proactively identifying and acting on risks and opportunities and working with Vice-President, Director, Manager and senior administration on responses as required.
* Respond to all media calls and inquiries and prepare detailed reports on media issues with the potential for impact on University reputation for the Manager, Communications; prepare and update key messaging for issues arising, news releases, backgrounders, fact sheets, bios; create and support related internal communication strategies; craft backgrounders, presentations, briefing notes, and proposals.
* Create and maintain relationships with members of the media (local, national and international) related to Trent’s key focus areas and actively pursue a match for media needs for content and experts with Trent’s faculty, students and alumni.
* Meet with senior administration, academic and administrative department heads to effectively and strategically identify expertise, faculty, student and alumni successes, opportunities for commentary on topical issues, features and profiles – and activate use in media relations and marketing/communications materials.
* Oversee development of online database of Trent experts for media use.
* Act as the main contact for the Office of Research to identify media opportunities, ensure timely announcements of research funding news and success stories, effectively highlighting the unique connection between research and teaching at Trent for media relations and marketing/communications materials.
* Maintain an awareness and understanding of media trends, innovations and opportunities and act as MCRA departmental expert on media, both traditional and new (e.g., social).
* Work with the Communications digital team to contribute to a University-wide Social Media Plan with clear strategies for making connections with media.
* Participate as the lead media and social media planner and advisor on various committees across the University.

##### Marketing & Communications

* Plan, write, oversee writers/designers, and edit materials for all mediums directed at both internal and external audiences, consistent with the University's mission, vision and strategic directions, enrolment (recruitment and retention) and objectives set by the Marketing & Communications and Recruitment & Admissions portfolio. Materials include, but are not limited to news releases, publications, web content, news stories, digital media, etc.
* Produce quality of content and effective delivery of Trent stories using a brand journalism approach and through a robust contribution to the publications plan and e-delivery strategy leveraging university events and success stories.
* Explore and implement creative ways to integrate written content with digital content, including video.
* As a lead on social media content, track and identify any issues requiring response ensure media prominence and a high level of social media activity through involvement and attendance at high profile Trent events, announcements, occasions and celebrations (e.g. school launches).
* Develop publications that provide an opportunity for the University to promote its researchers, faculty, students and staff.
* Drive innovation by researching best practices, media trends, new digital strategies in using both new and traditional forms of communication to effectively engage with the University’s key target audiences including media, prospects, and current students.
* Plan publications and e-projects, write, edit, proofread, and coordinate suppliers from concept to completion.
* Assist with strategic development of University’s various social media channels and content related to recruiting new students.
* Provide support and back-up as required to other communications and marketing functions related to project management, writing, and editing both for print and online, social media, internal communications and other administrative duties.
* Assist with digital and other photography/video/podcasts to support marketing, communications, recruitment and admissions materials and initiatives.
* Coordinate and liaise with designers, producers, photographers/videographers, and other marketing, communications, and creative suppliers to facilitate timely delivery of marketing material for various campaigns, announcements, initiatives, and events.
* Participate in team meetings and brainstorming sessions identifying marketing opportunities and new approaches to positively position Trent University in building reputation, awareness, and enrolment.
* Provide a high level of general writing and project management support to Manager, Communications, including speeches, speaking notes, preparation for interviews, etc.
* Post material to daily news and myTrent portals and other communications tools as they evolve.

##### Emergency Operations & Issues Management

* Act as back up to the Manager, Communications and/or Director, Communications on emergency communications and Emergency Operations Committee.
* Act on strategies for crisis/emergency communications as required, including emergency response, campus closures, issues management.
* Access and synthesize confidential and sensitive information, related to board governance, budgets, human resources, for backgrounders, speaking points, communications plans, etc.
* Maintain discretion and confidentiality with regard to files and sensitive issues, attending meetings, interviewing senior administrators to support the Manager of Communications on communication plans and materials.
* Develop briefing materials, backgrounders, speaking points for senior administration on media requests and confidential issues as required.

##### Administrative Duties & Support

* Manage team of external freelance writers, setting up contracts and purchase orders, providing direction on Trent standards and writing guidelines, assigning and editing work, etc.
* Act as key member and contributor to University-wide Integrated Communications Group.
* Assist in planning, development and implementation of public relations, marketing and communications, recruitment, and admissions special events, including Open House.
* Build effective relationships and collaborate with all administrative and academic departments on key messaging.
* Oversee and provide direction on work of Communications student employees.
* Liaise with suppliers (e.g. freelancers, printers, sign companies, designers) to ensure deadlines are met.
* Post material to daily news and myTrent portals, and other communications tools as they evolve.
* Support distribution logistics for print and e-newsletters.
* Estimate budgets for communications materials and projects and ensure timely, on-budget delivery.
* Contribute to management of materials library, assist with photo database, electronic and hard copy department files.
* Schedule, take minutes and follow-up on action items of department meetings, standing or ad hoc committees.
* Other duties as assigned.

#### Education Required:

* Honours Bachelor’s Degree (4 year) in Marketing, Communications, Journalism, Media Studies or related field (or General University Degree (3 year) with Post-Graduate Diploma or Specialization in any one of these areas).

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* A minimum of five (5) years’ experience in professional writing and communications activities (using new and traditional forms of media), preferably in a large public sector or corporate setting, is required.
* Demonstrated experience working with major national news outlets and/or magazine/trade/online publications.
* Excellent written and verbal communications skills.
* Proven record of securing positive press with key media, including magazine/trade/online publications at the national and international level.
* Interest and appetite for the latest developments in marketing and media as well as experience in integrating social media and online media strategies.
* Exemplary interpersonal, communications, conflict resolution skills with abilities to build bridges between complex stakeholder groups and individuals.
* Outstanding strategic, creative, and conceptual writing and editing skills for various media.
* Well-honed issues management skills and ability to manage confidential information and display sensitivity during difficult situations.
* Ability to manage diverse projects and shift priorities within tight timelines.
* Recognizable and consistent social media presence as well as interest and expertise in new media technologies.
* Excellent computing skills (Microsoft Office, Word, Excel, Project Management, email, internet, web content management, PowerPoint, etc.)
* Excellent sense of discretion, judgment, tact, and diplomacy.
* Demonstrated knowledge and experience in marketing and understanding of target audiences.
* Dedication to customer service and a student-centered environment.
* Superior interpersonal strengths, conceptual skills, the ability to collaborate creatively and consult with others.
* Conversant with new media technologies, social media, photography and videography.
* Experience in proof-reading, editing and in managing publication projects.
* Ability to work with constructive feedback and take direction.
* Knowledge of the Ontario secondary and post-secondary system environments, trends, and needs.
* An understanding of complex stakeholder groups and diverse audiences.