#### Trent University LogoEXEMPT JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Director, Communications

**Job Number:** X-399 | VIP: 1672

**Band:** EXEMPT- 10

**Department:** Communications

**Supervisor Title:** Vice-President, Communications & Enrolment

**Last Reviewed:**  July 8, 2021

#### **Job Purpose:**

The Director, Communications is responsible for the broad-scale marketing of Trent University to build reputation and profile, develop the institutional brand, and drive enrolment and other strategic initiatives reflecting institutional goals and objectives. Reporting to the Vice-President, Communications & Enrolment, the Director provides pan-institutional leadership on the University’s brand identity, and effective marketing and communications practices across the institution. The Director provides strategic advice and key messages on the management of issues and public affairs, and leadership for crisis communications planning and response. The Director leads a team of communications and digital marketing managers and staff with a view to enhancing and protecting reputation and contributing to the long-term sustainability of the institution.

#### Key Activities:

##### University Brand, Reputation & Profile Building

* Oversee institutional brand position and development across both campuses, ensuring the brand is visible, understood and adopted consistently across the University and is the anchor point for all internal and external communications.
* Manage the development of policies, tools and support for staff and faculty throughout Trent to properly implement the University’s brand identity including logo and name usage, imagery, colour usage and wording.
* Provide oversight to advertising and media buying agencies and develop goals and strategies for effective multi-media marketing campaigns to achieve institution-wide objectives.
* Initiate market research and competitor analysis to ensure all plans are based on a sound knowledge of the competitive market and target audience through new research, and analysis of existing primary and secondary sources.
* Actively monitor local, regional and national issues and opportunities that relate to Trent’s areas of expertise, and proactively engage Trent faculty to provide comments, participate on panels and profile Trent’s work.
* Identify issues that may affect Trent’s reputation and develop plans, provide advice, and monitor ongoing risks and opportunities, providing reports to the Vice-President Communications & Enrolment and, when required, the President/Vice-President’s group and Board of Governors.
* Present key performance indicators as identified in the plan and adjust as required throughout the marketing cycle. Provide a final report on the implementation of the marketing plan, KPIs/ benchmarks, successes, areas for improvement, and use of budgets. Conduct market research to further refine measures of success and identify areas for adjustment in planning and messaging.
* Provide back-up to VP in representing the University’s public affairs and marketing/communications interests at various sector associations and groups (Universities Canada, Council of Ontario Universities, CCAE, CAUBO etc.).
* Maintain and communicate a thorough knowledge of Trent University, its history, structure, current activities, programs and envisioned future and ensure that these values, tenets and objectives are reflected in the University’s communications plan.
* Ensure compliance with AODA standards in all marketing and communications.

##### Pan-Institutional Communications & Marketing

* Plan and ensure quality execution of departmental marketing and communications projects, e.g. presidential initiatives, large-scale fundraising campaign marketing plans, research communications, etc.
* Maintain the most current and leading-edge knowledge and understanding of communications, media and digital marketing (e.g. best practices in websites and social media) and lead the development of tools and formats to share this knowledge across the University.
* Lead Integrated Communications Committee; facilitate implementation of tools and structures to build relationships and share learning with those throughout the University in roles with communications focus (e.g. athletics).
* Develop and nurture a strong customer-focused team and lead formal and informal surveys to assess internal needs and satisfaction with services.
* Forge a productive working relationship with IT department leadership and ensure successful collaboration on the pan-departmental web and digital-based projects and other joint initiatives.
* Ensure effective use of institutional and departmental budgets and proper procurement practices.
* Provide reports to the University community on efficacy of marketing, advertising, external and internal communications initiatives.

##### Recruitment & Retention Communications

* Work on annual communications plan aligned with recruitment and retention targets and objectives.
* Track and ensure performance of communications plan in contributing to successful enrolment.
* Provide reports on enrolment-related communications plans as required for Strategic Enrolment Committee.
* Ensure effective execution and measurement of interim communications strategies and production of material to respond to institutional enrolment trends mid-cycle.
* Summarize measures and final reports for updates to the Vice-President, PVP and Board of Governors.

##### Issues Management, Public Affairs & Emergency Preparedness

* Participate as key member of Emergency Planning Group and back-up to VP Communications & Enrolment to ensure institutional preparedness for crises and emergencies. Be prepared to participate in Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG).
* Regularly review emergency communications plan, update templates and contacts for immediate use, ensure M&C team trained and ready to implement.
* Ensure communications team trained on all emergency software and activate use as needed in consultation with VP and Risk Management.
* Work with EOCG, Risk Management, AVP Physical Resources and AVP Students on campus issues and investigations as required.
* Provide Vice-President and spokesperson with responses to media and messaging across all communications platforms on sensitive issues/emergencies.
* Act as a spokesperson for the organization when appropriate.
* Oversee expert organization of announcements, media conferences, briefings and photo opportunities.
* Conduct daily media monitoring and scan the environment for threats, issues, policy changes, interest group activity etc., develop strategy and provide advice and recommendations to senior management.
* Work with VP to arrange for media relations training for senior University leadership to ensure effectiveness of spokespersons.
* Support management across the University in preparing for and responding to routine media inquiries.
* Ensure prompt and effective response to public and media inquiries.

##### Internal Communications

* Lead development, review and constant improvement of methods for delivery of internal communications throughout the University, including use of multiple media, improving readership and sense of pride in the University amongst students, staff and faculty.
* Build understanding and knowledge of employee communications best practices.
* Develop strategies that encourage staff and faculty to view and respond to messages on a timely basis.
* Support staff to respond on a timely basis to the distribution of internal messages in the most effective manner.

##### Human Resources & Staff Development

* Ensure the completion, distribution and understanding of annual goals, institution-wide marketing/recruitment plan and associated budget.
* Supervise assigned management staff as well as permanent and contract/ temporary staff.
* Manage recruitment for these positions, training, coaching, performance tracking, reviews and professional development.
* Provide parameters for the hiring, retention and use of contractors, consultants or suppliers in Communications.
* Promote and ensure adherence to all AODA, CASL, Health and Safety, Institutional and Human Resources Policies.

#### Education Required:

* Honours Bachelor’s Degree (4 year). Related professional designation an asset.

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* Minimum ten (10) years’ experience in marketing and communications and several years of management experience with a large public sector organization, corporation or agency.
* Outstanding management, leadership, business, marketing, and creative writing skills at an advanced university level.
* Demonstrated success in creating, implementing and measuring marketing plans as well as successful use of market research to accomplish organizational goals.
* Experience in strategic planning and facilitation, objective-setting, budget development and monitoring.
* Knowledge of a broad range of media, web/digital, social media and communications best-practices.
* Excellent judgement; diplomatic and tactful. Must manage highly confidential and sensitive information.
* Calm under pressure, able to manage multiple priorities and frequent interruptions and highly stressful situations.
* Creative, resourceful and innovative.
* Committed to superior customer service and delivering high quality projects.
* Proven ability to manage and lead a team.
* Knowledge and experience with post-secondary recruitment and admissions strategies, practices, terms, and measurements.

**Job Evaluation Factors:**

##### Analytical Reasoning

* Complex issues, which may never have arisen before, require an immediate response considering multiple stakeholders. Must be able to quickly process information, consider the pros and cons of various options, and decide on the best course of action – often in a changing, high risk/impact environment.
* Ability to conceptualize strategic marketing and communication plans in a collaborative working environment with ambiguity and cross-functional teams.
* Work requires highly developed reasoning and creative problem-solving skills to develop effective communication tools in a highly competitive environment, to address service needs that exceed departmental resources and to encourage adoption and use of centralized brand tools in a highly decentralized environment.
* Must daily decide on the value and relevance of many pieces of information and decide how to deal with them.

##### Decision Making

* Must be relied upon to make decisions and provide good advice to the Vice-President, senior administration and faculty, on important and sensitive issues, without the guidance and/or approval of the President VP. E.g. Senior administrator seeks advice on how to deal with an urgent, high profile, inflammatory issue with potential for impact in the media.
* Decisions require high level planning and coordination of interdependent groups and activities: the employee receives general guidance only, at the broadest level, on complex, multi-faceted assignments, with responsibility for all planning of work, formulation of strategies, program direction, and work plans, limited only by broad policy. Many decisions are made without reference to superiors or require senior level consultation and collaboration where the long-term impact to the sustainability or image of the University, programs or significant resources are involved.

##### Impact

* Issues management has direct impact on the reputation of the University e.g. deciding how to respond to a media inquiry on a negative issue (e.g. don’t respond, who will answer questions, developing key messages etc.) can determine the outcome of the news story and its impact on the University’s reputation.
* Impact on the organization is significant and long term. Poor decisions may have negative effects on reputation, relations with sector associations, faculty and staff groups, the student body, external stakeholders, or the broader community. It is likely that errors especially in the public domain, will have a substantial negative impact on the University’s public reputation, e.g. publications with incorrect information can damage the University’s reputation; effective marketing materials can have a direct impact on applications and potential for increased enrolment.
* The website is the University’s primary means of communication and recruitment. Errors or loss of functionality can have wide ranging reputational and financial impacts.

##### Responsibility for the Work of Others

Direct Responsibility for the Work of Others:

* Supervise management staff, including permanent and contract, temporary and students.
* Manage recruitment for these positions, training and performance tracking, reviews, and professional development.
* Provide parameters for the hiring, retention and use of contractors, consultants or suppliers in Communications.
* Manager, Digital Marketing
* Digital Project Manager
* Communications & Media Relations Officer
* Communications & Media Relations Officer
* Communications & Media Relations Officer (Current students)

Indirect Responsibility for the Work of Others:

* Support for other comms positions (e.g. Durham Communications & Media Relations Officer, etc.)

##### Communication

Internal:

To provide advice, gather information, secure involvement, seek input:

* President & Vice Presidents
* Board Chair
* PPG, Deans
* Faculty chairs
* Directors, Management and staff
* Students
* Student media
* Alumni leadership and alumni

Faculty: marketing and recruitment priorities, media opportunities, information required

For President, VPs, AVPs, Deans, Directors and Managers, recruitment and retention priorities, budgets and outcomes, brand standards and AODA

Staff members

Students, to secure participation, gather information

Student media, to respond to inquiries

External:

* Media: publishers, executives and reporters
* Various public and private sector organizations: communication leads
* Owner/Principal: Advertising Agency
* Owners/Principals: local and regional printers, video companies, web/technology experts, designers, writers
* Local groups and organizations
* Sector associations: COU, UnivCan

##### Motor/ Sensory Skills

* Small motor skills - computer, phone, smartphone
* Dexterity/coordinated movement - operate technology & equipment, drive to meetings
* Medium/large motor skills - set up presentations, displays, A/V equipment
* Hearing, speech - complex communication
* Sight - read, review written and audio/visual material

##### Effort

Mental:

* Ongoing visual demand - reading, writing: constant flow of and response to information
* Ongoing mental demand - conceptual thinking: sustained attention to conflicting and urgent demands; reasoning, calculations, creativity and accuracy under pressure
* Ongoing stress and pressure - problem-solving: immediate response to emergencies/changing priorities, high level of analytical reasoning, parsing of facts, implications and possible outcomes; phone calls, visits, advice: frequent interruptions to workflow and concentration; 24/7 nature of communications component

Physical:

* Motionless for long periods - meetings/desk work: deadlines and volume of work require sitting at meetings/computer/desk for several hours at a time; long periods of sustained concentration & overtime; email volume
* Small amounts of walking, standing - to events, meetings, presentations

##### Working Conditions

Physical:

* Fatigue - Manages a consistently high volume of work, often after hours
* Lifting - Occasionally assists in transportation of materials e.g. AV equipment, boxes of brochures, event/display material

Psychological:

* Stress - Difficult, complex and rapidly changing situations that can have significant repercussions if not managed well. multiple, conflicting priorities and deadlines; steady stream of complex information requiring analysis, response or delegation; regular interruptions due to media calls, staff needs, last minute requests/advice for other depts; criticism/challenges from university community/media; lack of control over pace of work

Scrutiny - Difficult, complex and rapidly changing situations that can have public repercussions if not managed well.