JOHN WIGHAM

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS LEADER | DIGITAL MEDIA

Change Management | Internal & External Communications | Crisis Management | Social Media | PR | DEI

Director of Communications

Experienced senior communications professional with over 10 years of turning strategic concepts into tactical execution to achieve business results. Dedicated, compassionate leader with demonstrated ability to build performance-driven, motivated teams. Successful track record of maintaining strong relationships across all levels through collaboration and consultation. Proven change and crisis management skills leading teams to execute on large scale, multi-year initiatives. Demonstrated ability to deliver authentic, compelling, relevant messages for diverse audiences using modern techniques to cut through competing noise in the digital communication landscape.

Professional Experience

Gore Mutual Insurance, Cambridge, ON

Director of Communications 2021 – 2022

Communications and change strategy

- Delivered communications strategies to support the 10-year business transformation journey; built communications team, implemented new multi-media and technical production processes, modernized channels internally and externally.
- Partnered with leadership teams and COEs to execute on 2-year learning and change strategy for operating model transition across 50% of the business including new organizational structure, systems, processes and products.
- Led communications team to support change strategy for return to work and launch of hybrid model; consulted on People Experience initiatives such as new rewards structure, people engagement survey launch, and created a new annual leader summit.

Channel strategy

- Designed and led internal and external channel strategy including public and media relations, social media, and crisis communication plans.
- Developed Gore Mutual's Culture (hiring campaigns), DEI, SGE, and new social media brand launch campaigns; to highlight the benefits of working for the company and its new purpose and brand centred around an insurance company that does good in the communities it serves. Original creative assets on social media garnering views of +500,000.
- Improved Gore Mutual's social media presence and engagement across LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter increasing followers by more than 500% in under 2 years.
- Relaunched SharePoint from 2013 legacy platform to 2022 Cloud version, working with the business to migrate and update the look and feel with a modern content management system partnering with stakeholders for all departments across the organization.

Executive communications and employee engagement

- Partnered with C-Suite to launch annual leader summit for approximately 150 leaders, participated in the working committee to design the agenda, managed the show flow, sourced new digital platform and broadcasting vendor for last minute virtual delivery due to Covid.
- Introduced and executed newly formatted internal quarterly national townhalls to support business plan, raise C-suite profiles, and highlight company goals and objectives with average views and participation of over 85% of employees. Supported delivery, ensured clear agenda, prepped C-Suite and Senior leadership team.

Aviva Canada Inc., Markham, ON

Senior Manager, Internal Communications 2008 – 2020

Comms Business Partner (2015-19), Online Comms Consultant, Corporate Affairs (2014-15), SharePoint Solutions Developer (2013-14), Claims Technical Content Writer (2012-13), Comms Specialist (2010-12), Sr. Underwriter (2008-10)

- Led the team responsible for org-wide internal comms strategy; developed KPIs for reporting analytics.
- Consulted on communications strategy for organizational changes to ensure internal messaging, developed communication plan for RBC partnership with Aviva. Highlighting Aviva's company purpose and values, introducing a new system and managing change through communications working closely with HRBP.
- Partnered with HR to bring Aviva's new hybrid model to life in 2017, introducing a new way of working, including hotelling, working remotely, closing 6 offices and opening 2 brand new facilities as central Hub locations. Managed all new office signage, employee handbooks, welcome kits, introducing the idea of neighborhoods, collaborating with workplace champions and leaders to support and drive positive support.
- Built in-house recording studio increasing turnaround time for C-suite videos resulting in annual savings of $150K.
- Launched and produced monthly, all-employee livestream from various offices located nationally averaging 800 views per month; prepared executive team to share their business strategy, provide updates on hot topics and shifted to fully virtual platform during the pandemic.
- Managed 3 CEO transitions over a period 3 years including change comms, new organizational structures, revised business objectives and plans and a multitude of leadership changes and reporting structures.
- Led the Aviva Pride Community for 3 years (one of five DEI employee resource groups) and managed $60K annual budget; spearheaded the first march in Toronto Pride Parade; attendance and coordination of employee participation, increasing employee participation each subsequent year.
- Recommended and implemented all gender bathroom for all offices nationally to support Aviva DEI initiatives and creating a more inclusive workplace environment.
- Collaborated with project team and business stakeholders to support the change impact for launch of new Commercial Property & Casualty product; delivered through approximately 70 change champions across the organization to 800+ employees, external claims partners and commercial brokers.
- Produced social media recruiting campaign for the claims department to attract millennials, Gen Y, Next Gen to insurance; raising brand awareness through creating an external identity for the organization with original video content social media campaign which resulted in 1 million+ views – 800 applications received – 80 new hires hired over a period of 6 months.
- Worked with HRBP to develop a new process to handle influx of resumes; working with the business to be able to handle the volume and get new employees hired in a timely fashion.
- Built and developed modernized SharePoint sites for Personal lines, Commercial Underwriting, and Claims, creating a modern document and process sharing ecosystems for all employees job related material, manuals, how-to and training reference materials. Rolled out across the organization while teaching the business units how to self-manage and maintain with modern document archiving and versioning.

Belairdirect, Toronto, ON

Underwriter 2007 – 2008

- Ensuring customers policies and transactions on their accounts were handled correctly.
- Evaluate individual risks to ensure the right premium at the right price.
- Ensure compliance with relevant company practices and underwriting guidelines.

TD Meloche Monnex, Toronto, ON

Senior Broker 2002 – 2007

- Delivered an exceptional customer experience, handling all elevated customer complaints with an aim to make concessions and corrections where possible within an exceptions framework and adhering to underwriting guidelines.
- Managed an escalation queue for new and junior brokers, provided coaching and feedback on internal processes and underwriting guidelines.

Education & Professional Development

Honours BA in Mass Communications & History, York University, Toronto, ON (2001)

RIBO Insurance License 2002

OTL Agent Insurance License 1999

Technical Skills

Microsoft: Office 365, SharePoint, Adobe Photoshop

Social Media: LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok