

# Cynthia Nichols, Ph.D.

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## SUMMARY

Experienced researcher and communications professional with unique skills and abilities in brand management, data analysis, crisis management, graphic design, strategic planning and social media. Research skills include qualitative and quantitative analysis, and the ability to attack questions from different angles. Technologically adept with extensive experience in marketing and PR. Competent self-starter and natural leader who thrives in fast-paced environments.

## EXPERIENCE

### **Director of Strategic Communications MediaScience**

**April 2017-Present  
New York City**

Responsible for the strategic planning, execution and reporting of the communications initiatives, public relations, web development, user interaction and craft key messages for internal, external and client audiences. Develop, design and execute effective messaging in collateral, processes and strategies in support of overall company initiatives.

- Oversee the development of marketing collateral to be used across all mediums, including print, web, email, video, and social media to help deliver the messages on the identified channels.
- Manage vendor resources, including media and public relations firm, designers, writers, printers and other vendors to support marketing and communications functions.
- Monitor campaign deliverables to ensure targets and objectives are met in a timely manner and within the proposed budget parameters. Measure performance against goals (ROI and KPIs) and provide strategic recommendations for optimization.
- Manages other communication and marketing projects as assigned by the EVP and CEO—such as increasing panel enrollment in Chicago, Austin and NYC by more than 35% in 4 months.

### **Strategic Communications Consultant Independent Contractor**

**Jan 2007 - Present  
AL / FL / NY / OK**

Worked with clients to develop budgets, business plans, launch products, create crisis management plans, design graphic elements, conduct media training, and develop strategic campaigns to roll out new products. Created strong branding for organizations and positioned for growth. Clients have included the Regional Foodbank of Oklahoma, CB Richard Ellis Real Estate, Express Employment Professionals, Nickelodeon, Koch Communication, Sara Claire & Esther fashion line, the Tulsa Health Dept, the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust, PlayScience, Saxum Public Relations and Rumi Innovations, among others.

- Launched app-based recruitment system targeting millennials across the country.
- Conducted media and crisis response training for more than 400 individuals.
- Led brainstorming to develop and execute strategies and tactics, resulting in effective PR programs.
- Utilized Cision, Constant Contact, MailChimp and a variety of social media metric systems for measurement and execution of strategic messages.
- Completed qualitative and quantitative market research on community engagement for the Regional Foodbank with more than 1,800 subjects and 3 methodologies, resulting in recommendations for changes to on how to collect donations with a potential for \$1.69 million in donations each year.

### **Associate Professor Oklahoma State University, School of Media & Strategic Comm.**

**August 2010 – July 2017  
Stillwater, OK**

Instructor for 31 courses in strategic communication, public relations and advertising at OSU. Courses include *Graphic Design, Research Methods, Advanced PR Media, Crisis Communication, Sports PR, Campaigns, Media Effects and Management & Strategies*, among others.

- Supervised the National Student Advertising team with 5 top-5 finishes, 1 District win and placing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation (2017). Guided students to win 16 American Advertising Awards, 2015-2017.
- Trained students in crisis management, with student projects resulting in crisis management plans for more than 55 organizations in Oklahoma & Texas.
- Managed student teams in an agency environment resulting in 40 unique strategic campaigns. Served as primary contact for each client and directed all aspects of campaign development.
- Trained more than 150 students on ROI, SEO and Hootsuite data analytics.
- Completed complex data analysis of qualitative and quantitative research data with statistical software programs (e.g. SPSS, Excel, SAS), resulting in 18 published journal articles & book chapters, presentations at 38 conferences, 7 panels, and 3 top paper awards on the topics of media effects,

social media, strategic communication, entertainment, body image, millennials, online bullying and children's media. Also led 8 Masters theses. *A complete list is available upon request.*

- Served on university, regional and national committees, led strategic planning, developed algorithms and best practices to make operations run more smoothly.
- Received research funding from external sources totaling more than \$51,000.

### **Marketing Coordinator**

**Sept. 2005 – Dec. 2006**

#### **Jetta Corporation**

**Edmond, OK**

Managed day-to-day business of marketing department, including research, planning, implementation and evaluation of PR activities, as well as establishing budgets and deadlines. Coordinated and implemented marketing projects including special events, press conferences, and advertising for brand awareness.

- Oversaw the complete rebranding of the organization from a "me-too" product position to a high-end product position, resulting in a 12% increase in sales over a two-year period.
- Wrote all copy for all marketing collateral, redesigned the company website, and developed logos and artwork by interfacing with agencies for rebranding of company.
- Developed news releases and media kits for both rebranding and new product launches.
- Completed complex competitive analysis for reposition and big-picture planning.

### **Product and Sales Support Analyst**

**Jan. 2003 - July 2004**

#### **Kelly Services, Inc.**

**Troy, MI**

Provided payroll analyses on national salary databases to support corporate and field employees with targeted sales initiatives, coordinated several corporate-wide meetings and events, and served as a subject matter expert on product offerings.

- Acted as the Quality Advisor for the Marketing department.
- Provided training to fellow employees on various software applications.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Doctor of Philosophy**

Mass Communication & Information Sciences    Cognate: Marketing  
University of Alabama

Jan. 2007 - Aug. 2010  
Tuscaloosa, AL

- *Dissertation Title:* How fast can they learn? Developmental differences in information acquisition of educational and narrative content through pacing and distance.

### **Master of Arts in Communication**

Advertising & Public Relations  
University of Alabama

Aug. 2004 - Aug. 2005  
Tuscaloosa, AL

- *Thesis Project:* Making Alabama's Own: Rebranding & Repositioning WVUA 7 News

### **Bachelor of Business Administration**

Marketing, Cum Laude *Minor:* Theatre    *Emphasis:* Science  
Oklahoma Baptist University

Aug. 1998 - Dec. 2002  
Shawnee, OK

## **HONORS & SERVICE**

- Journal Record, [Achievers Under 40](#), 2017
- AAF, National Student Advertising Competition, Second Place in Nation, 2017
- AAF, National Student Advertising Competition, District 10 Winner, 2017
- AAF District 10 Educator of the Year Award Nominee, 2016
- Oklahoma City Young Advertising Professional of the Year Award Nominee, 2016
- National Staffing [Employee of the Year](#) Professional-Managerial Sector All Star Award, 2016
- Entertainment Studies Top Paper Award, 2015
- Oklahoma City Ballet, Barre Chair, 2014-2017
- Regional Foodbank of Oklahoma, Leadership Council, 2014-2017
- WNBA Williams Women of Inspiration Honoree, 2014
- Plank Center for Public Relations Fellow, Edelman Fellowship, 2012
- Graduate Teaching Fellow, The University of Alabama, 2008, 2009
- The University of Alabama Sam S. May Commitment to Service Award, 2007
- Memberships: PRSA, AAF, AEJMC