Melissa Russell

Multimedia Communications Professional

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Innovative, award-winning multimedia communications professional with progressive experience developing and implementing high-level content to ensure continued reader engagement and viewership. An analytical professional with a proven track record as a journalist and administrator skilled in driving increased readership across all platforms. A collaborative communicator focused on building relationships to boost social media presence and visibility and training fellow professionals in journalistic practices.

Digital & Print Media

Audience Engagement

Viewership Growth & Analytics

Business Development

Reader Relationship Building

Program Management

Social Media Management

Staff Training & Leadership

Community Outreach

Professional Experience

RUSSELL EDITORIAL SERVICES • Reading, MA • August 2022-Present

MULTIMEDIA SERVICES FOR MEDIA OUTLETS AND BUSINESSES

- Editorial services including blog posts, magazine articles, case studies for higher education, health care industry, trade publications, and other platforms. Current clients include: Emerson College School of Communications, Dassault Systèmes, Professional Mariner magazine, Keene Sentinel, Granite State News Collaborative, New Hampshire Bar News, Regan Communications.
- Small business media management: blogs, website content, newsletters, social media and community engagement.

GATEHOUSE MEDIA/GANNETT NEW ENGLAND • Lexington, MA • February 2009 - August 2022

REGIONAL FEATURES EDITOR APRIL - AUGUST 2022

- Led team of journalists producing features content for Gannett New England/Wicked Local websites, providing leadership in creating original content that could be published or adapted for multiple outlets including USA Today.
- Ensured journalistic standards for news reporting, grammar, AP style, flow, consistency, impact and clarity, while applying sound SEO and analytic strategy.
- Ensured team alignment with corporate growth strategy and future development.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MULTIMEDIA (EDITORIAL MANAGEMENT FOR PRINT, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA) • June 2018- April 2022

- Led teams of journalists producing daily content for Wicked Local websites and newspapers, using Google analytics and other data to determine content aimed at targeted audiences, based on audience engagement and feedback.
- Copyedited content to ensure journalistic standards for news reporting, grammar, AP style, flow, consistency, impact and clarity.
- Researched, wrote, reported and edited digital content focusing on issues of local interest including housing, development, crime, health and wellness, politics, business, education and personalities.
- Directed social media strategy for each journalist using Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- Lead team planning of original stories, and quarterly projects.
- Trained new staff members regarding digital tools, SEO, writing for web/mobile, in-depth reporting.
- Ensured team alignment with corporate growth strategy and future development.
- Recruited, hired and managed freelance content providers and optimize for budget.

SENIOR MULTIMEDIA JOURNALIST (REPORTER AND EDITOR FOR PRINT AND DIGITAL/SOCIAL MEDIA) • January 2009 - May 2018

- Spearheaded all aspects of print production until corporate changeover to "Digital First" initiative in October 2016; continued to execute primary editorial duties in collaboration with print and digital teams.
- Increased website page views by 68.94% year-over-year through targeted messaging and strategic posting by date and time on Facebook.
- Secured consistent month-over-month increases in page views using Facebook and Google analytics
- Created, developed, and published daily content for Wicked Local news websites and print edition of weekly newspapers.
- Collaborated with digital teams to author additional content, including maps, charts, timelines, and Storify collections.
- Established and expanded social media presence across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to provide immediate and thorough coverage of breaking events.
- Utilized Google analytics and tracking tools to monitor daily digital audience.
- Represented publications at annual town days to engage with active readers and introduce publications to potential audiences.
- Developed community contacts, collaborated with major stakeholders to create targeted content.
- Appeared on weekly podcast through local cable company to provide on air local news commentary.

BROOKLINE ADULT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM • Brookline, MA • July 1989 - April 2001

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR / ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

- Directed innovative liberal arts program providing courses covering literature, art history, science, performance, special events, enrolling more than 500 students per term.
- Administered health and exercise programs for special needs audiences
- Recruited speakers and seminar hosts for educational forums.
- Created and directed special events including panel discussions and presentations by distinguished members of community.
- Recruited, hired and trained more than 100 instructors. Created new courses and curricula.
- Managed budget operations, production deadlines, and media relations.

Education

Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies, focus on American Literature | HARVARD UNIVERSITY | Cambridge, MA Bachelor of English and Communications | STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT GENESEO | Geneseo, NY

Awards

New England Newspaper & Press Association Award for Social Issues Feature Story | Waltham News Tribune, 2018

New England Newspaper & Press Association Award for Business Coverage | Waltham News Tribune, 2018

New England Newspaper & Press Association First Prize for Election Coverage | Winchester Star, 2017

New England Newspaper & Press Association Award for Social Issues Feature Story | Winchester Star, 2016

New England Newspaper & Press Association Award for Religious Reporting | Winchester Star, 2016

New England Newspaper & Press Association Award for Health Reporting, Opioid Crisis | Winchester Star, 2015

New England Newspaper & Press Association First Prize for Team Government Reporting | Westford Eagle, 2013

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