

SARA TANNER

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SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Integrated marketing manager and creative strategist with 13+ years of extensive project and partnership management experience across multiple disciplines including advertising, creative production, public affairs and higher education. Skilled at building multi-channel content strategies to achieve organizational goals, drive brand affinity and tackle complex problems. Creative leader focused on collaboration, fostering real connections, and telling authentic stories through technology. Robust leadership experience in strategic planning, organizational effectiveness, team development, crisis management and response, and high-impact stakeholder engagement.

TECHNICAL SKILLS: Adobe Creative Suite • WordPress • Google Analytics • Constant Contact/MailChimp • Salesforce • Wrike • Trello • Salesforce • Tableau • Qualtrics • AP Style

AREAS OF EXPERTISE: Project Management • Content Creation • Branding & Identity Development • Executive Communications • Event Planning and Management • Strategic Planning • Change Management and Team Engagement • Copywriting • Digital and Mobile Marketing • UX/UI Design • Social Media & Influencer Engagement

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Florida, Division of Student Life

CHIEF OF STAFF

JUN. 2020 - PRESENT

- Served as a senior advisor, thought partner, and strategist to the Vice President on operational matters including crisis response, strategic planning, community relations, organizational development, and brand positioning.
- Managed administrative staff, day-to-day activities and functions for a \$140M budget to drive effective executive communications and strategy implementation.
- Executed university-wide projects and initiatives, guiding preparation and necessary follow-up, including meetings and responses to key issues, fielded questions, and requests.
- Strategically oversaw organizational growth through operational realignment, the creation of new mission and vision, a new brand roll-out, and the formation and implementation of a five-year strategic plan.
- Built external partnerships with external community organizations, corporations and governmental entities.

Selected Highlights:

- Played a central role as thought-leader and manager in coordinating all aspects of UF's COVID-19 pandemic response providing national award-winning support and engagement to 120K+ students, faculty and staff that allowed the university to safely remain open and minimize budget impacts.
- Managed the comprehensive marketing and communication strategy for the implementation of the university's housing Master Plan, including the construction of a \$200M+ 42,000-square-foot residence hall.
- Facilitated a holistic onboarding, training, recruitment and employee engagement framework to support staff, while diversifying our administrative and professional staff by 37%.
 - UF received its first (and second) recognition as one of the 30 Most Promising Places to Work in Student Affairs from Diverse Issues in Higher Education because of these efforts.
- Led a partnership with IT to secure \$1.76M in new funding for the development of comprehensive wellness mobile app and extending support for counseling resources, which significantly reduced wait times for students seeking counseling services from 15.3 days to 4.7 days.

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

JAN. 2013 – JUN. 2022

- Led an internal creative agency with \$1.2M operating budget, providing project management, web development, public relations, marketing strategy and creative production services to 25 departments.
- Managed a high-performing, multidisciplinary creative team composed of 13 full-time and 26 part-time staff.
- Oversaw the internal and external communications and content strategy across platforms including a news publication, 60+ websites, 20+ social accounts, and 100+ digital displays across campus facilities.

- Directed crisis communications and response on student-facing topics, on call 24/7 for urgent response.
- Cultivated relationships with advertising agencies, external news outlets and trade media, responding to information requests and interviews as a university spokesperson and regularly pitched stories to generate earned media.

Selected Highlights:

- Led sponsorship and influencer initiatives that generated approximately \$600K in external revenue by connecting national brands such as PINK, GEICO, and Pepsi with experiential marketing opportunities and organic event integration.
- Increased unique donors by 137% and total funds donated by 102% during Giving Day campaign through a coordinated multi-unit marketing and prospect engagement plan.
- Established an in-house creative agency from the ground up including new facilities, human resources, technology, budget, operating procedures, and university relationships that saved the \$200k.
- Conceptualized and implemented brand identity for the Hitchcock Field & Fork Campus Food Program to support students who experience food insecurity.
- Developed a social media-based, micro-fundraising campaign for first-generation scholarship program alumni raising \$15k in its inaugural year.

COORDINATOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

MAR. 2010 - DEC. 2012

- Wrote and designed publications for internal and external audiences, including fundraising initiatives and special campaigns.
- Led branding and marketing efforts for the 13 departments including developing advertising, social media and marketing efforts for external and internal outreach.
- Managed content and design for five websites.

COORDINATOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

JUL. 2009 - MAR. 2010

- Planned and organized special events for donor and staff engagement.
- Produced a weekly e-newsletter to 54,000 students.
- Established communication plan for cultivating a family association with 45,000 members.

Straw Hat Visuals

PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

JUL. 2009 - OCT. 2017

- Managed production on projects for international commercial, advertising, and editorial clients, including Nikon, ESPN, Sports Illustrated and BBDO.
- Designed and managed content for multiple websites including billfrakes.com, strawhatvisuals.com and nebraskaproject.com.

Selected Highlights:

- Assisted on two National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) recognized documentary projects, The Nebraska Project and Let Freedom Sing.
- Coordinated production on campaign for Nikon’s flagship camera, Nikon D5.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

MASTER OF ARTS IN DIGITAL ARTS & SCIENCES | UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

DEC. 2014

- Master’s thesis project: *GatorTimes App*. Specialization in UX/UI design, data visualization, and gamification.

CERTIFICATION IN DIGITAL MARKETING | HARVARD UNIVERSITY, Division of Continuing Education.

OCT. 2014

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN JOURNALISM | UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

JUN. 2009

- Specialization in Photojournalism.

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE | UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

JUN. 2009

- Minor in Environmental Studies.