

LAURA WATKINS

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OBJECTIVE

A senior-level marketing position in a small, growing firm that will benefit from my extensive marketing, public relations, communications, advertising and design experience and skills.

EXPERIENCE

May 2004 to Present • BenBella Books, Inc. • Dallas, Texas

Vice President and Art Director (2006 to Present)

Director of Marketing and Publicity (2004 to 2006)

As Director of Marketing and Publicity, created and executed all promotional and media efforts for rapidly growing Dallas-based book publisher. Responsibilities included press materials/media kit content development and design; creating and maintaining book-specific Web sites; managing author media and signing tours; viral, grassroots and Internet marketing; broadcast and print media pitching and placement; convention and trade show activities; foreign rights; direct and special sales. Successfully managed campaigns and received wide media coverage for nearly 100 titles.

Responsibilities as Vice President and Art Director include an overall management role in all areas of the business, as well as the concept development and design of more than 30 titles a year, including: covers and interiors, company collateral, advertising, and all Web design and development.

Key accomplishments include:

- Developing and implementing a comprehensive media and marketing campaign for *The China Study*, making it one of the bestselling nutrition books of the last four years, with nearly 300,000 sold
 - Overseeing BenBella's publicity efforts, leading to numerous successes, including author appearances on NBC's *Today Show*, MSNBC, Fox News, ESPN, CNN, hundreds of local and national television and radio outlets, as well as coverage in publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Miami Herald* and *Time Out New York*. BenBella Books has also been featured in *The Dallas Morning News*, *Dallas Observer* and *D Magazine*
 - Redesigning BenBella Books' cover development process to create more attractive, marketable, error-free covers, resulting in significant improvement in sales per book, marketplace attention and rights sales
 - While overseeing marketing and art direction, hands-on design of the majority of covers and all Web site development has saved the company more than \$20,000 annually
 - BenBella Books is now the largest for-trade publisher in Texas
- 2003 to 2004 • National Semiconductor • Arlington, Texas

Public Relations/Communications

Revised all communication vehicles. Redesigned Intranet, updated look and content of closed-circuit television content, as well as improved other traditional communication vehicles such as onsite signage and benefits collateral.

Facilitated focus groups with senior managers and associates. Organized and hosted monthly and quarterly management meetings. Managed all employee special interest groups. Developed relationships with local media members. Worked with community organizations to plan special events and create media opportunities. Spearheaded wellness program, and provided promotional support.

2001 to 2003 • University of North Texas • Denton, Texas
Director of Marketing, Intercollegiate Athletics

Planned and managed all game day and special events to cultivate support for revenue-generating programs and the Mean Green Foundation. Produced all media to effectively and cost-efficiently market events, including: print advertising, radio and television commercials, campaign-related news releases and conferences, targeted direct mail, broadcast e-mail and Web. Responsible for design, content creation and distribution of all materials. Structured advertising buys and agreements to provide maximum exposure to targeted markets. Print advertising, collateral and commercials were featured at the 2002 National Association of Collegiate Marketing Administrators Conference.

Developed sponsorships through public speaking engagements, committee memberships, event partnering and exclusive co-marketing opportunities. In 2001, initiated corporate sponsorships totaling a fair market value of nearly \$20,000; in 2002, more than \$30,000. Created grass-roots movements in the local and university community to increase season ticket sales and booster club memberships.

Partnered with licensing agency and retailers to promote the sales of university merchandise and spirit items. Successfully repositioned North Texas' brand and launched campaign in fall of 2001. Increased sales by 61 percent.

2000 to 2001 • Eventrix, Inc. • Dallas, Texas
Director of Communications, Webmaster

Responsible for the development and design of all communications and marketing products. Led management team (investors, company founders, marketing research and business development staff) to create the company's corporate image, and establish a go-forward strategy for all marketing and communications programs.

Media development/output included corporate Web site, news releases and marketing collateral. Exterior and ancillary audiences were prospects, current clients, local and trade media, vendors, vendor partners, investors and executive board.

As member of the company's management team, job function also required aggressive lead generation and ongoing business development. As Webmaster, responsibilities included ongoing development and design of the corporate Web site, company Intranet and interface design of demos and client solutions.

1999 to 2000 • Allegro Development • Dallas, Texas
Communications Manager, Webmaster

Scope of duties included design and content direction and creation of all print and Web marketing materials featuring nine software products. Solely responsible for the development of sales and direct marketing collateral, Web communications and corporate branding. Additional projects included expansive campaign development for the company's annual user conference, the Allegro Summit. Also, acted as team leader for new software campaign (Allegro 6.0) and related special events.

1997 to 1999 • Marketing Specialists • Dallas, Texas
Corporate Communications Manager, Webmaster

Key areas of responsibility included design, development, introduction and maintenance of Marketing Specialists' Web technology products. Construction and implementation included an award-winning (*CIO WebBusiness Magazine* 50/50 Award) company-wide Intranet including Human Resources, Finance, Risk Management, Marketing and Business Services modules; a corporate Internet Web site; and secured Extranets for clients such as M&M Mars, Kellogg's, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Colgate-Palmolive, Campbell's, Heinz and Perrier.

Coached departmental teams to produce substantial communications and sales tools for associates and clients. Instituted user confidence programs to grow usage of the company's Intranet and Extranets.

As a member of the office of the Chairman and CEO, duties included production of the company magazine; fiscal and content overview of advertising campaigns; execution of multi-media products, such as live Web casts; corporate identity campaigns; coordination of major trade show events; investor relations and media relations.

1996 to 1997 • Branch-Smith Publishing • Fort Worth, Texas
Graphic Designer

1995 to 1996 • Denton Publishing Company • Denton, Texas
Marketing and Promotions Coordinator

1994 • Neiman Marcus/Horchow • Dallas, Texas
Copy Editor

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1993, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas
B.A., Journalism/Public Relations

2001, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas
Executive & Management Development – Sales Certification