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January 2013 Extended Newsletter Content:

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Top 5 Communications Trends for 2013

Inside the Mind of a Hiring Manager – Brice Dare

We continue our series on featuring hiring managers from different fields of Communications. If there is an area you are particularly curious about, please email us at students@iabc.bc.ca.



Brice Dare is a Communications Manager at St. Paul's Hospital Foundation which raises funds for patient care and research at the hospital. He started his path by attending Journalism school and quickly learning that it wasn't his passion. He changed focus and went through the SFU Communications Co-op program where he found his calling as a communicator! He's worked in roles in numerous sectors including: government, non-profit, education and private. He shares with us some of the things he's looking for when hiring an entry-level communications role.

What makes non-profit sector different than the other streams of Communications, such as corporate, marketing or PR?

In some companies a communications professional will usually have a fairly narrow role, but I find that with non-profits you're able to take on a more generalist role. You have the opportunity to participate and contribute to so many different aspects of communications.

What do you look for when you hire interns or junior positions?

It's hard to pinpoint exactly what it is, it's certainly a combination of things and their skill set should be complementary to the role. It may not be the number of years but their skills and what kind of experience they have. Certainly how they present themselves is very important too.

What is the one thing that students absolutely must have if they want a job in non-

profits (other than having a great job application and polished interview skills)?

Solid writing skills! I can't think of anything more critical than writing skills. It's the one thing every communications professional should be able to fall back on.

What kind of roles or experience should students look for when breaking into Communications?

It's important to keep an open mind - any kind of experience you can get would be helpful. In the early part of your career, your experiences may not correlate directly to what you want to do but it's important to see what skills are transferrable. Even writing at a newspaper is great experience where you can gain some important skills that could lead to your first job.

What pieces should they showcase in their portfolio when looking for a role?

Any relevant writing pieces that you can explain their purpose, significance, accomplishments and challenges. A portfolio showcase is an opportunity to discuss further your communications process and how you developed a particular piece. Any web work, graphic design pieces...anything you are proud of and can tell a story about. It's important to note that your cover letter and resume are also representative of your capabilities as a communicator as well.

Looking back at the communications interns/co-op students you have worked with, what distinguished the best interns from the good interns?

So much of it is attitude. Are they pleasant to work with? Are they eager to learn? Do they bring ideas and passion? These are all things workplaces want to see.

What are the biggest challenges that a Communications professional will encounter?

I think in a lot of circumstances, businesses are still getting a grasp on the value of communications. I think people have a basic level of what we do but it's a challenge to get them to understand the value a good communications professional can bring to an organization.

Do you have any other advice?

It's a tough job market out there, so don't be afraid to try out different things to get experience. I would encourage those looking for jobs to be patient, never lose sight of what you want to do and why you want to do it. Ultimately the people who can demonstrate a passion and interest in their work are the people who are able to succeed.

The Mentee Perspective: IABC/BC Jr Mentorship Program

Did you know that Student Members of IABC/BC are eligible to participate in the Junior Mentorship Program? This unique program pairs junior communicators with industry professionals for a year to work on career goals, communications issues and more! The Program offers students a chance to make valuable connections, foster friendships and gain valuable insight in the world of Communications.

This month we feature Rikki Maccuish, a Communications student at Royal Roads currently in the Mentorship Program.

How did you learn about the Jr Mentorship Program?

I learned about the Jr. Mentorship Program through an email from IABC and was immediately interested. In this tough work-search climate any extra help and insight is so valuable.

Why did you apply to the Mentorship Program?

I'm a new IABC member and am in the final stretch of my BA in Professional Communications (Royal Roads University) and this seemed like a great opportunity to learn from someone with experience and meet a senior IABC member. I had a lot of questions about looking for work and how to position myself during my career-change, and I thought it would be good to get input from someone I didn't know that well and who would provide honest feedback. It also seemed like a great way to network.

What do you aim to get out of the Program?

I would like to: learn as much as I can from my mentor about business Communications, optimize my cover letter/resume and gain as much insight as I can into management-level practices. Besides this I hope to establish a good relationship with my mentor, IABC/BC and continue to build my network.

How are you finding the Program experience so far?

The experience has been great so far. Because I live in Victoria and am working student I can't really attend many of the IABC events, which are usually held in Vancouver. As a result, my mentor and I meet over Skype/phone. She's given me a lot to think about regarding my career-change and has provided some helpful career advice, which is what I really need now. The advice from the Program to set an agenda helps keep our conversation on track and I look forward to taking in as much as I can in the next year.

New Trends for Communications in 2013

What does 2013 have in store for us in the Communications world? We highlight three major trends we think will be key to industry development.

Social Media Marketing – Video

Social media has become a key tool in marketing and from what we SAW in 2012, photo sharing and images were key vehicles in communicating brand and messages. In 2013 we will continue to see visuals as vital in social media sharing. We hear often, "pictures speak more than a thousand words", so experts have predicted that videos will slowly take part in social media marketing in the future. 2012 was about photos and images, look how they transformed companies like Instagram. 2013 will be about videos: as an ad tool, content strategy and sharing medium. No longer will we have to take great photos, we'll need to know how to edit awesome videos. Do we foresee the rise of video editing software companies/apps?

Multi-screen Strategy

In 2012, the war between desktop and mobile remains unresolved. Instead, consumers move

between multiple devices towards achieving one goal, as discovered by Google's report "[The New Multi-screen World: Understanding Cross-Platform Consumer Behavior](#)"

Mobile devices are making information more accessible than ever, and businesses have great opportunities to connect with consumers with a mobile-friendly experience. Sadly, 21% of websites are optimized for mobile devices. With smartphone adoption surpassing 50%, we communicators have a compelling business case for businesses to develop a mobile presence.

Internal Social Media

Not all companies can support an internal communications network, but many are looking towards internal social media-type platforms to facilitate communications and improve engagement. A prediction in 2013 will be for one or two key front-runners in SaaS or web tools that will establish the trend for an internal social media network. Gone is the water cooler of years past, it's all about conversation around the latest C-level blog post.

SEO

It's all the buzz, it's all the rage, it's all about SEO. What is it? SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization. So why is it so important? Well think about the last time you Google-d or Bing-ed something, that's why. The main goal of SEO is well, to make your webpage/content stand out from all the rest of the search results. This [article from Business Insider](#) can give you a general starting point on how to improve your SEO.

Paid Ads as a Skill

Looking to add to your skill set? Get some experience in running a paid ad campaign. Get familiar with PPC, AdWords, analytics and conversion statistics. Even if internet marketing is not in your plans, be familiar with the basics in case you're asked to add this to your strategy. Not everyone loves data and analytics, but you'd be surprised by what could find.

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