

Tony Martinez Jr., MBA

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Executive-Level Communications Professional

Results-driven Communications professional with 15+ years of success in coordinating consistent media relations with national and global media outlets. Passionate about executing public relations programs that capture growth opportunities, deepen public support, optimize brand exposure, and enhance key messaging. Capable of protecting the organization's reputation and developing a favorable and professional image through robust business communication agendas across multiple channels. Adept at seeking high-level placements in print and online media to drive traffic across social media platforms. Accustomed to managing numerous programs/projects, while leading teams within fast-paced and regulated environments requiring consummate accuracy and attention to detail. Proficient in speaking, reading, and writing in both English and Spanish.

Areas of Expertise

- Executive Communications
- Proactive Outreach Programs
- Public & Media Relations
- Digital/Online Marketing
- Internal/External Comms.
- Data/Metrics Reporting
- Brand Identity & Awareness
- High-profile Media Events
- Speech Writing & Storytelling
- Budget & Cost Management
- Cross-functional Collaboration
- Team Leadership/Mentorship

Career Experience

City of Aurora, Aurora, IL

2021 – Present

Director of Communications

Counsel departments and key staff members for internal/external communications. Establish cohesive communications and online campaign strategies to engage with stakeholders, build brand awareness, ensure target audiences understand the City's mission, and influence public perceptions across all media platforms. Schedule media activities, conferences, and meetings with community leaders and elected officials, while managing large public outreach events (10k+) to support city initiatives. Lead the strategy, development, execution, and optimization of internal media relations, crisis management, and communications. Supervise and mentor cross-functional teams towards timely disseminating service information effectively and achieving outlined objectives.

- Identified and resolved live broadcast deficiencies related to City Council meetings and the City's public access channel by implementing new audio/visual components and equipment that reached larger audiences.
- Field media questions, release information to counter negative publicity, and handle crisis communications for internal and external stakeholders.
- Utilized SharePoint Online to develop a brand-new employee intranet site that delivers news and events to staff members.
- Recommended and secured a contract for developing a new website that improved communication channel interaction.
- Reduce overall expenses by controlling operational budgets, devising cost-effective plans, and allocating resources accordingly.
- Cultivate and preserve key relationships with the mayor, media outlets, influencers, executives, online communities, and staff by fostering a culture of engagement and delivering a unified message.
- Build on internal partnerships to establish and elevate the organization's voice.

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Wheaton, IL

2018 – 2021

Director of Communications & Marketing

Served as Communications Officer/Spokesperson and 501 c3 Foundation Executive Director for 60+ forest preserves and six educational facilities. Drove internal and external public relations activities and communications plans by developing and maintaining brand voice and integrity. Oversaw outreach events, volunteer initiatives, media relations, partnerships, emergency/crisis planning, fundraising speech writing, and public presentations that strengthened community engagement. Prepared budgets and headed the design of digital marketing campaign strategies and materials on all platforms, such as advertising and online promotions. Offered excellent leadership and coaching to ensure eight team members attained targets.

- Increased subscriber newsletter list by 30K new emails through executing targeted social media campaign competitions on YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and custom mobile app.
- Boosted video views by 400% within the first year and created a TikTok that generated 1M+ views by restructuring the Communications department and hiring a video multimedia specialist to ensure alignment with organizational needs.
- Raised philanthropy donations by 40% within one year, as well as grew social media following by 30% within two years.
- Decreased outsourcing of design/communication work by 80% in the first year
- Collaborated with lobbyists to successfully communicate district needs regarding legislation in Springfield.
- Administered quarterly book studies that contributed toward personnel excelling in marketing and communication aspects and realizing career development goals.

West Aurora School District 129, Aurora, IL

2013 – 2018

Director of Community Affairs

Acted as Communications Officer/Spokesperson for 18 district schools and 12.5K students. Designed outreach program strategies that represented the district favorably and positively impacted the greater community. Responded to inquiries and drafted various communications to promote the district's brand vision to key individuals, other organizations, and local businesses. Managed social media content plans to enhance the district's profile. Executed annual State of the District address for staff. Carried out public press conferences in partnership with media and PR agencies.

- Created weekly e-newsletter for 18K recipients (parents and staff) with an open rate of 60%+.

- Gained 60% community approval (largest state-wide) to pass \$84.2M referenda for school building improvements without requiring any external consultants.
- Designed “Parent University” engagement series which engaged 1K+ parents in the first year of implementation.
- Expanded site visitors by 30% after revamping and launching the district’s website.
- Directed charitable contributions, grants, and volunteer initiatives that facilitated program operations.
- Assured project and departmental milestones were met and adhered to approved budgets and timelines.
- Solidified relationships with community leaders, media representatives, parents, and internal employees.

Compass Automation, Elgin, IL

2012 – 2013

Marketing Manager/Production Manager

Guided and established career plans for 13+ production staff, while allocating project resources. Provided oversight for inventories, production timelines, installations, and supply chain management/logistics. Conducted in-depth research and analyzed trends, such as production figures for custom automation systems, pricing, supply and demand, consumer buying, and competitor activity. Reviewed existing marketing strategies for weaknesses and implemented solutions within budget constraints. Represented the company at trade shows and major industry-related events.

- Spearheaded innovative advertising/promotional campaigns that generated new leads, stimulate business growth, surpassed profit/sales quotas, maximized customer satisfaction, and elevated the company’s brand visibility.
- Conceptualized and designed a website, while integrating Google Analytics to track and submit performance metrics reports.
- Crafted monthly newsletters that highlighted product benefits and features, as well as the company’s future direction.
- Orchestrated and led compelling merchandise video productions in cooperation with the production crew.
- Secured lucrative contract agreements through complex negotiations with suitable vendors.
- Utilized website and social media to produce outreach plans and upload seven customer commercial testimonials (staff and client scripts) that further drove engagement on YouTube and Facebook likes to 1.5K.

East Aurora School District 131, Aurora, IL

2010 – 2012

Communication & Community Relations Facilitator

Influenced community outreach and related aspects by handling social media promotional efforts, information output, program management, PR, media requests, event execution, crisis communications, and volunteer initiatives. Represented Latino and East Aurora Foundation as Liaison and Spokesperson for cultural celebrations and school meetings/visits.

- Coordinated district-wide publications, such as writing press releases and distributing bi-annual newsletters to 13K households, employees, and faculty.
- Set up alumni activities/events which included school tours, while transitioning alumni relations to in-house.
- Bolstered parent engagement from two to 120, optimized event participation from 30% to 100% within four months, as well as received overwhelmingly positive feedback by launching a fun educational curriculum and monthly community program in 2012 alongside 60 middle/high school students and administrators.
- Extended partnerships from 90 to 155 with community organizations and businesses through fundraising, sponsorships, career day events, shadowing programs, scholarships, and customized engagement.
- Modified website, increased Facebook likes from 2K to 8K, and sustained online presence on Twitter and Facebook by regularly creating and posting appealing online content.
- Enabled efficient resolution of all disputes with the public and external vendors.

Additional Experience

Allstate Insurance Company, Northbrook, IL, Agency Sales Communications Lead/Regional Liaison

2007 – 2010

Education

Master of Business Administration in Leadership (GPA: 3.7) | Aurora University, Aurora, IL

Bachelor of Arts in Marketing (GPA: 3.7) | Aurora University, Aurora, IL

Community Leadership and Affiliations

Board Member, Aurora Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2022 – Present

DuPage County Advisory Council, The Conservation Foundation, 2019 – 2021

Chairman, Aurora Hispanic Heritage Advisory Board, 2011 – 2013

Treasurer, Aurora Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 2012

Vice President, Aurora Puerto Rican Cultural Council, 2008 – 2010

Technical Proficiencies

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint); Google Analytics; Adobe Creative Suite; Website Management