

Shara R. Sokol

shara@s2creativecom.com

www.s2creativecom.com

Highlights

Web and media-savvy communications consultant with a strategic, results-driven orientation and proven deadline writing, editing and project/event management skills.

Experience

s2 creative communications ltd: February 2005- present

Sole proprietor of communications firm that helps clients strategically pinpoint, and reach, prospective audiences through a wide range of communications vehicles and tactics. Core company skills and expertise are culled from many years of professional marketing, promotional and editorial work in the corporate and not-for-profit arenas. Recent company clients include IBM, Barnes & Noble College Bookstore Division and JESNA (Jewish Education Service of North America).

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES (IBM): September 1999 – February 2005

IBM Global Financing (IGF): October 2002 - February 2005

Intranet Manager

Responsibilities:

- Evolve business unit's global intranet strategy to maximize employee productivity and support IBM's technical and cultural transformation as a leading on demand enterprise.
- Daily operations including: story assignment, editing, layout, and promotional programs focused on increasing web site readership, as well as supervision of webmaster and freelance writing staff.
- Corporate liaison to unit's Europe and Asia intranet managers.
- Member of pan-IBM editorial board responsible for web content and editorial standards worldwide.
- Senior producer, executive Town Halls and other executive forums. Supervised outside vendors for on-location audio and teleconferencing.

Results:

- Global intranet strategy that focused executive, corporate and unit information messaging into compact "news you can use" stories and features consisting of employee information, productivity tools and resources.
- Increased readership by approximately 30% over two-year period (as measured by Surfaid diagnostics).
- Successful redesign, and subsequent updates, of IGF intranet sites according to IBM design and content standards - on-budget and ahead of corporate deadlines.
- Repositioned business unit's worldwide site to serve not only IGF employees but IBM internal sales audiences needing the right information to sell financing to their clients.
- Obtained nearly one hundred percent of "profiled" readers, out of a prospective audience of 3,000 employees worldwide, for the unit's intranet site.
- Attained average attendance at bi-monthly Town Hall and other executive platforms of 500 on-site, and 300 by teleconference. Implemented web-enabled post-meeting feedback tool for unit events, averaging 500 responses per event, which showed improved employee satisfaction with messaging over two year period.

Special assignment: IBM EMEA (June-July, 2004)

- One-month assignment to IBM EMEA (Europe Middle East Asia) Paris headquarters to train new IGF European intranet manager and work with communications counterparts in France and London. Efforts resulted in a unified global strategy and higher cross-promotion of information between IGF's Worldwide, Americas and EMEA intranet sites.

IBM Americas Internal & Executive Communications (June 2001-October 2002)

Editor/Writer

Responsibilities:

- Creation and management of corporate editorial projects targeted to IBM Americas sales employees in the United States, Latin America and Canada.
- Speech writer for IBM Americas executive personnel.
- Responsible for web-based collaborative communications tools for internal sales audiences.

Results:

- Launched IBM Territory Manager web pages that enabled sales leads to get important information and messages to their teams via a simple, easy-to-use interface. An enhanced version of the tool is still in use six years after project completion.
- Created editorial schedule of internal articles for the unit's employee intranet site, and the company's "Selling for IBM" worldwide sales site, that enabled sales employees to share successes, best practices and tactics with their counterparts globally.

IBM Americas Events Communications (September 1999-June 2001)

Event Producer

Responsibilities: Supervision of creative event elements including: scripting, executive continuity and web copy, as well as event vendor selection, budgets, internal client relations and staging.

Results: Improved creative production and budgetary outcomes for IBM's Corporate Technical Recognition Event (CTRE), a million dollar annual production honoring IBM's top level technology professionals. Enhanced employee satisfaction with event content and messaging (as measured by feedback surveys).

Special Assignment: Floor Manager, IBM Surf Shack, Sydney 2000 Olympic Games (August-October 2000)

- Successfully implemented IBM "Fanmail" worldwide marketing program for the Olympic Games. Worked with Olympic athletes (in French and English) on internet access and the creation of personal "Fanmail" sites for family, fans and friends, resulting in the creation of approximately 500 Fanmail sites that were visited by one million readers during the Games' two-week period.

SAINT VINCENTS COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER (June 1995-August 1999)

Special Projects Manager (May 1997-August 1999)

Responsibilities: Mission development, communications strategy and event production for the opening of the Saint Vincents Comprehensive Cancer Center (SVCCC).

Results:

- Led project group consisting of physicians and professional staff in the coordination and editing of Center's opening year strategic "Regional Marketing Plan" and "Annual Goals and Objectives."
- Produced SVCCC Grand Opening event attended by 600 of the tri-state area's medical and health professionals, executives, philanthropists and political dignitaries. In charge of event logistics, catering and budget as well as timely implementation of planned phases leading to the opening gala and accompanying day-long event.
- Produced the College of Medical Education (CME) accredited "Multiple Myeloma Symposium" sponsored by the SVCCC and the Multiple Myeloma Foundation. The conference included patient education meetings and an on-site physician conference and live webcast that brought presenters from the "Seventh Annual Multiple Myeloma World Congress," patients and medical professionals to the Center to discuss the latest findings on blood-related cancers.

Marketing Specialist (Part-time during graduate studies: June 1995-May 1997)

Responsible for public relations/editorial activities, and coordination of employee educational events.

UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK (August 1993-95)
Senior Account Executive, Marketing & Communications

Responsibilities: Development of strategic communications vehicles in support of philanthropy's organizational and institutional vision and mission. Also responsible for executive speechwriting, feature and copywriting.

Results: Creator/editor, "UJA UpClose" newsletter mailed to 60,000 donors quarterly. Supervised publication's staff and managed annual budget of \$200,000. The newsletter received the 1994 Public Relations Society of Americas' (PRSA) Bronze Award in its category.

THE 92ND STREET Y (August 1987-93)
Director, Media Relations

Responsibilities: Institutional and event public relations, marketing/membership campaigns and editorial for 92nd Street Y catalog mailed three times per year.

Results: Regularly placed items and stories in Newsday, The New York Post, New York Observer, Crain's New York Business, The New York Times and Village Voice, as well as Fox News' "Good Day New York," WNBC, WCBS and WABC evening news programs. Senior member of executive committee responsible for the repositioning of the organization into six core divisions that extended the Y's market-effectiveness to targeted audiences and major donors.

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL PRODUCTIONS (August 1983-87)
Senior Publicist

Responsibilities: Publicity/promotional writing and media placement activities for the Music Hall's theatrical and concert as well as special events including: MTV Video Awards I and II, Night of 100 Stars, Coca-Cola Centennial Anniversary Celebration and The Magnificent Christmas Spectacular featuring the Radio City Music Hall Rockettes.

Results: Regularly placed stories and items in tri-state media (see 92nd Street Y). Developed and launched regional and national public relations campaigns for the company's ventures in special event production, television programming and tourism. Placements include: Advertising Age, USA Today, The New York Times, Travel Weekly, Travel and Leisure and Meeting News.

RITA SALK ASSOCIATES (1982-83): Press agent/writer for roster of entertainment personalities.

PLANNED COMMUNICATION SERVICES (1981-82): Writer/on-location production assistant for film production/public relations firm.

Education

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (May, 1998)
Zicklin School of Business, Baruch College, City University of New York.

BACHELOR OF ARTS (May, 1981)
State University of New York
Major: French/Minor: Journalism.

References available on request.