

TONY ANDERSEN

CONTACT

971.803.1712

tonytonyandersen@gmail.com

tonyandersen.com

Portland, OR USA

STORY

I tell stories that connect with people for a purpose. Using a range of tools, my strategies make an impact and change narratives. As a veteran writer, with a fifteen year career rooted in managing some of the West Coast's most contentious, high-profile issues, I lead staff that deliver course-changing content and create teams that serve as strategic partners for corporate executives, government officials, and community organizations.

EXPERIENCE

Strategic Communications Director, wildfire recovery task force leader **State of Oregon** | December 2020 - Present

Recruited to lead a short-term emergency response operation, serve as one of three incident commanders and oversee all strategic communications, external affairs, and government relations for the Governor's top 2020-2021 priority to recover from the worst natural disaster in state history. Oversee statewide strategic communications team for the high-profile operation to remove wildfire debris and hazard trees in nine counties during the 2021 legislative session.

Strategic Communications Director

Portland Water Bureau | July 2018 - December 2020

Oversaw the team in charge of all communication, outreach, and public affairs strategies for one of the largest western U.S. water utilities in Oregon's largest media market. In this high-profile leadership role, built a new team with top talent, rebranded the bureau's image and narrative, launched new content and digital programs, and oversaw strategy for numerous billion dollar infrastructure projects and rate increases.

Director of Marketing and Public Relations (Medellin, Colombia)

Lifeafar | June 2017 - July 2018

Through a one-year contract and an opportunity to live abroad, directed and oversaw a cross-cultural marketing and public relations team in a fast-paced startup environment in Medellin, Colombia. Launched profitable strategic business and marketing plans that expanded international reach. Served as architect for a rebranding process that attracted attention from big name travel brands and earned international coverage. Marketing strategies increased rental occupancy rates by 20% and raised millions in investment revenue.

Senior Communications Officer

Oregon Health Authority | June 2016 - June 2017

Managed highly-visible public affairs strategy for contentious, multi-year environmental public health crises, including drinking water and air quality. Served as communications lead for the 2017 legislative session, drafted testimony for the Governor on top health policy issues and launched successful strategic communication plans for Oregon's largest government agency,

Public Affairs Director, Public Information Officer

Oregon Department of Forestry | July 2013 - June 2016

Directed and managed a large public affairs and communications team through one of the most severe wildfire seasons on record and improved state and federal relationships through innovative campaigns while modernizing the agency's narrative and public image. Launched a revamped website and new email marketing and social media strategies during a pivotal 2015 legislative session. Managed high-profile forest management plan public process, equitable hiring strategies, and led numerous Governor and federal delegation tours.

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributor, speaker and guest writer:
local and state civic organizations

Salmonberry Trail Foundation, Board of
Directors

Mentor and speaker, University of
Oregon Public Relations Society of
America

League of Minority Voters, Oregon
Board of Directors

Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Ex-
officio board member

Elected to the North Clackamas Parks
and Recreation District board, District
Advisory Board vice-chair

City of Milwaukie, Oregon Parks and
Recreation Board member

Portland South Waterfront Greenway
Committee member

EXPERIENCE contd.

Communications lead, education reform initiatives

Oregon Governor's Office | November 2012 - July 2013

Hired to fulfill a short-term fixer and change-agent role during the 2013 Oregon Legislative Session. Successfully led a multi-channel communication strategy during a difficult session resulting in historic legislation, bipartisan support, positive coverage, and a new state division to ensure lasting reform.

Senior consultant, marketing, communications, digital engagement

dhm research | January 2010 - October 2012

Served as part-time (moonlighting while at Metro) and full-time senior advisor/consultant for the Pacific Northwest's most prominent public opinion and polling firm. Advised government agencies, national corporate clients, and major brands on translating polling results into impactful communication and marketing strategies. Created and oversaw pioneering digital public engagement panels and grew firm presence nationally through business development strategies.

Legislative Coordinator, Policy Associate

Metro Regional Government | July 2007 - December 2011

Served as staffer for unpopular land-use and transportation policy decisions and acted as point person for community relations and engagement committees. Served as liaison and manager of the agency's legislative process and as project manager for the Portland Metro region's political redistricting process. Created and oversaw the Metro Council's strategic sponsorship and funding program, and managed a team of interns and policy analysts.

EDUCATION

Masters of Science, M.S. | Writing and Strategic Communication

Portland State University

Completed masters program while working full-time

Bachelors of Science, B.S. | Public Policy & Management, Writing

University of Oregon

Graduated Cum Laude with honors

Bachelors of Science, B.S. | Undergraduate creative writing workshop

University of Iowa

Transfer

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LET'S TALK

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Comms Expertise

- Crisis + reputation management
- Emergency + crisis response
- Strategic communications
- Strategic comms planning
- Marketing + comms strategy
- Content and digital strategy
- Media relations
- Public speaking and presenting
- Writing, editing, editor-in-chief

Leadership Expertise

- Modernizing teams
- Change management
- Hiring and recruiting talent
- Leading with empathy
- Equity and inclusion
- Strategic planning and budgeting
- Executive team leadership
- Mentoring and staff development
- Team building