

Mark A. Buzan, Communications Consultant

APR Candidate

Magnifying the under appreciated talents and value of organizations and professionals through strategic communications. Develop strategic communications services for government, associations, and corporations.

Progressive experience and expertise in the following:

- **Media relations**
- **Internet marketing & Social media**
- **Published writer & invited speaker**
- **Communications**
- **Government operations**
- **Research**
- **Strategic marketing**
- **Team building & management**
- **Trilingual: French, English, Spanish**
- **Business and association management**

Entrepreneurial drive with an appreciation for non-profit and government sector needs. Solid project management skills in seeing tasks through from beginning to end.

Professional Experience

President & Principal Consultant

(2001 - Present)

Action Strategies, Gatineau (QC) & Melbourne (ON)

Full service International Public Relations, Government Relations, and Marketing Communications

Example list of clients and projects include:

Canadian Paralympic Committee, Ontario's Education Quality Accountability Office, Ontario Special Olympics Committee, NAIMA Canada, Flowers for Kids, Estate Therapy Inc., Colby Properties Ltd., Canadian Academies of Science, and National Research Council.

- **Media Relations:** Managed relations with the press for multiple clients. Developed media lists and pitched story ideas to TV, Radio, and Print publications throughout North America. **Result:** Coverage included Fox Morning News, Macleans Magazine, the Toronto Sun, CFRA (Ottawa), and CJAD (Montreal) Radio.
- **Government Relations:** Managed grassroots advocacy campaigns, researched policy initiatives, and lobbied federal and provincial governments for infrastructure funding and policy changes for multiple clients. **Result:** In one case, I achieved over \$30,000 in previously refused infrastructure funding for a municipal client.
- **Project Management:** Managed multiple clients and marketing projects to develop a profitable business. I developed a marketing, networking and publicity plan to make my expertise known in my target markets. **Result:** A profitable consulting business was created with clients ranging from Canada, the UK, Malaysia, and the United States.
- **Presentations and speeches:** Wrote and delivered speeches and presentations for the advancement of the business. I delivered presentations before reputable organizations such as the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Marketing Association. I also developed presentations to pitch new business. **Result:** My speaking engagements increased the number of prospects for the business and my presentation skills delivered over \$80,000 in new business in one case alone.
- **Public Relations:** Developed publicity and credibility development campaigns for a number of clients. I leveraged positive press coverage, Internet public relations and organized events to expose

the under appreciated talents and value of clients. **Result:** I found creative means for clients to save thousands of dollars in advertizing.

- **Marketing:** Developed marketing and public relations plans for numerous clients. I researched and identified the appropriate messages and tactics to develop a unique plan template. **Result:** I developed plans that in three client instances alone laid the groundwork for solid market penetration and publicity.

External Communications Director

(2003 - 2005)

Canadian Construction Association (Ottawa, ON)

"The voice of Canada's largest industry, representing interests of the non-residential sector of an industry that employs close to 1 million Canadians producing \$164 billion in goods and services".

Recruited to service the Quebec membership base. Developed strategic communications and government relations services to reach out to legislators, Canadian youth and women, as well as to the national media.

- **Problem solving:** Identified sources of difficulty where the CCA brand was not penetrating or being identified with targeted publics. I initiated a widespread consultation process with the national press gallery and with the members of the association. I led a committee team of 5 in reviewing the brand standards of the association. **Result:** CCA is now equipped with a brand standard policy and has revised its promotional materials that have nationwide reach.
- **Campaigning:** Managed and developed membership-driven advocacy campaign leading up to the 2004 federal election. I managed the development of a special election watch website geared to grassroots members and the national press gallery. **Result:** Member associations were equipped to organize town hall debates in small towns throughout Canada and media coverage was widespread ranging from small town newspapers to Macleans Magazine after the election.
- **Government Relations:** Coordinated various advocacy campaigns. I identified stakeholders and government officials who could assist in gaining policy advances for the construction industry. **Result:** High-level presentations were secured with government decision makers bringing awareness of the industry's concerns.
- **Event planning:** Coordinated an annual lobbying event on Parliament Hill. I lead a coalition of seven associations towards building government awareness for the need for more infrastructure investment. I coordinated the logistics of invitations and marketing of the event as well as the development of the theme. **Result:** Attendance at the annual event was more than tripled from over the previous year gaining acclaim from stakeholders and government officials.
- **Team building:** Coordinated an annual lobbying event on Parliament Hill. I lead a coalition of seven associations towards building government awareness for the need for more infrastructure investment. I coordinated the logistics of invitations and marketing of the event as well as the development of the theme. **Result:** Attendance at the annual event was more than tripled from over the previous year gaining acclaim from stakeholders and government officials.
- **Media Relations:** Lead the development of one of the first intensive media relations campaigns to place the industry's prominence in the same light as similar sized Canadian industries. I undertook an intensive consultation process with the national press gallery and changed the association's messaging to meet the gallery's expectations. **Result:** Press coverage was attained in twice in Macleans Magazine, the Atlantic Business Journal, the Toronto Star, the Ottawa Citizen, and CBC Business Newsworld.

Public Affairs Manager

(2003)

Canadian Hydropower Association (Ottawa, ON)

CHA is the national trade association dedicated to representing the interests of the hydropower industry. CHA members represent more than 95% of the hydropower capacity in Canada.

Recruited to organize the Annual General Meeting and Forum on Hydropower as well increase attendance. Charged with coalition building as well as government relations assistance.

- **Leadership and Team Building:** Implemented organization's first ever NGO outreach program and advanced industry's agenda with parliamentarians. By reaching out and networking with renewable energy associations, environmental and aboriginal stakeholder groups, the objective was to build appreciation for the capacity of hydropower as a green energy source. **Result:** The coordination of the first meeting of solar, wind and hydro energy associations took place.
- **Government Relations:** Lobbied federal government to present the case of hydropower offering the solution to reaching Kyoto Accord targets. A strategic plan was developed to identify parliamentarians with significant hydropower resources in their riding. Outreach efforts were then undertaken to educate them on this presence. **Result:** I achieved presentations before cabinet ministers, MPs & civil servants.
- **Public Relations and Marketing:** Lead membership retention and recruitment from amongst the hydroelectric industry. I developed an internal electronic newsletter that was monthly in nature. In addition, I took the time to network with association members and those company executives who were not already members. **Result:** The adherence of two new corporate members.

Executive Assistant

(1998-2003)

Jason Kenney, Member Of Parliament (Ottawa, ON)

First elected to Parliament in 1997, Jason Kenney served as the Official Opposition Critic for National Revenue, then as the Official Opposition Critic for Finance and later as the Critic for Canada-US Relations. He now serves as the Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism & advisor to the Prime Minister.

Recruited first as a Junior Legislative Assistant, I later advanced to Executive Assistant handling correspondence, managing staff and volunteers, and various legislative and campaign projects.

- **Media Relations:** Organized successful media campaigns that resulted in national exposure and also handled challenging and hostile media inquiries during 2001 leadership crisis. I crafted well-written media releases and press kits. Under media pressure and in crisis communication situations, I maintained a cool demeanour and stayed on message. **Result:** Jason Kenney remained one of the most quoted MPs in Ottawa and during the leadership crisis; I was able to limit negative media coverage and exposure.
- **Leadership:** Responsible for office budget of \$250,000 and oversaw the needs of two other staff members and hired summer interns. I reviewed the budgetary needs of investing in staff. **Result:** Budgetary savings from overhead equipment were reinvested into staff training, development and retention.
- **Campaigning:** Undertook a variety of outreach efforts to support Mr. Kenney's Private Members' Bills. I developed a database of over 20,000 names and categorized them by interest. In addition, various public relations efforts were undertaken to raise awareness. **Result:** Over 55,000 signatures were amassed nation-wide in support of 2 minutes of silence on Remembrance Day.

Education & Certifications

Bachelor of Social Science (Political Science) UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA, Ottawa, ON (1997)

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS INSTITUTE OF CANADA, Ottawa, ON (2000)

- Master's Level Seminar: Government Relations Fundamentals - Received "A" and commendation from former advisor to Prime Minister Chrétien

Member of the Canadian Public Relations Society (2003 – Present)

APR Candidate for Professional Certification (Final exam October 2007)