

MARY PRILLER

Marketing and Communications Lead

Portfolio: cookiesandcontent.com

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Antioch, Illinois (open to relocation)

Strategic Comms, Public Relations, Brand Builder, Outreach & Stakeholder Development, Data & AI

SUMMARY: strategic communications lead with 15+ years of experience advancing municipal, nonprofit, tourism, and public-sector priorities through integrated communications, public relations, stakeholder engagement, and brand strategy. Brand storyteller and relationship builder with a proven ability to translate complex initiatives into clear, compelling narratives that build public trust, deepen community connection, and elevate organizational visibility.

County and local government, executive-level communications with a strong understanding of community culture and the public-service mission. Specialized boutique agency experience spanning B2B, CPG, DIY/electrical, F&B, public figure.

- Media & Public Relations
- Crisis Communications
- Stakeholder Engagement
- End-to-End Creative
- Storytelling & Narratives
- Internal & External Comms
- Budget Planning & Grants
- AI Prompt/Text & Image Gen
- Fund Development
- Visual Comm Development/Strategy
- Cross-functional Collaboration
- Special Events & Activation

TECH: Google Analytics, Google Ads, Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, Wix, WordPress, Mailchimp, Constant Contact, Adara, CrowdRiff, Sprout Social, SharePoint, Salesforce, Asana, various enterprise dashboards

NONPROFIT BOARD: Chair, Social Media Committee, Illinois Arborist Association

AWARDS: National Recreation and Park Association Public Relations Award, Illinois Park & Recreation Agency Showcase, The Communicator Awards, Illinois Governor's Award / Marketing Excellence, HSMAI Adrian Award

EXPERIENCE

FREELANCE MARKETING & COMMS CONSULTANT, MJPR Communications (Chicago), 2025 - Present

Valuable GTM strategies and integrated comms for travel and tourism, public figure, community development, municipal agencies, home goods/consumer. Project portfolio includes city agency and nonprofit/open space clients.

- Strategic partnership development building long-term beneficial relationships for funding and stakeholder care
- Resource mobilization engaging key stakeholders, increased program participation and community buy-in
- Pro bono strategic comms for charitable organizations whenever possible
- **Client success: increased overall ARR by 40%, reduced CAC by 20%, boosted CLV by 30%**

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING, C-Strategies (Chicago), 2022 - 2025

MarComm lead for award-winning strategic comms and public affairs firm contract, serving the front line of public policy and political campaigns. Impactful tactics utilizing networks to build strategy, guide public opinion, manage crises. Creative leadership driving Chicago's largest multi-billion-dollar infrastructure project and landmark agreement with airline partners, [O'Hare 21](#).

- **Strategic development and multi-platform integrated rollout of \$1.5B** public introduction of the modernization of O'Hare International Airport Terminal 5, the \$300M ElevateT3 project, and critical path projects
- **Led a team of 4 direct reports;** hiring/onboarding, training, performance reviews, and project management; cross-functional and client teams (5-10 non-direct); project oversight, strategy, delegation, and final deliverables
- **Executive communications** for senior leadership: press releases, briefs, speeches, pitch decks, talking points, PSAs, social media activity. Speakers bureau and national conference content
- **Collaborated** with community and outreach teams to amplify the City's commitment to diversity and inclusion
- **Steered the program's \$10M rebrand and [web relaunch](#)**
- **Secured high-profile coverage, \$600K monthly publicity value**
- **Produced VIP expansion event (\$350K budget), logistics, security, media and press coordination**

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING, C-Strategies, Cont'd

Marketing partnership development and rollout for the **Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) Aviation Careers Partnership**. Robust program with CPS leading messaging and engagement to inspire a future workforce pipeline.

- **57K students reached, 72 schools**

Nurtured cross-functional teams for multi-channel comms promoting the airport's 21st-century vision and customer experience. Branding and messaging, traveler engagement, airline partner, officials and assist agencies liaison.

- **Communications DEI & PMO Lead/City Council Aldermanic Diversity Working Group**
- **Exceeded participation goals for minority- and women-owned businesses (MBE, WBE)**
- **Generated nearly \$800M in contracts, 100+ outreach events**

MARKETING MANAGER, Visit Lake County (Gurnee, IL), 2017 - 2022

Senior communications lead for the official DMO, elevating Lake County's profile to its many communities, residents, tourism partners, elected and civic leaders, boards, businesses, and the 111M visitors.

- Served as tourism spokesperson, shaping public-facing messaging that supported **\$2B in visitor spend, 34.4% growth**
- Communications planning, media strategy, crisis response, campaign development and reputation building
- Managed project budgets (**\$500K to \$1M**), aligning communications with measurable growth
- Cultivated high-value media relationships including press and FAM tours (**Midwest Living, Meredith, Food & Travel**)
- Led award-winning campaigns for marketing and social media excellence (**Illinois Governor's Award**)
- Built a digital playbook (**7M campaign impressions, 80K website sessions, 60K unique users, 3M OOH**)
- Oversaw editorial and content strategy to deepen engagement and visitor behavior (**320K content sessions**).
- Critical partnerships including the **Illinois Office of Tourism**, expanding funding opportunities, visibility and reach
- Board advisement on communications strategy, media interaction, grant opportunities, and onboarding support

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, Wheeling Park District (Wheeling, IL), 2015 - 2016

- Developed integrated comms and branding for agency (**1.5K programs and 13K guests**)
- Key communicator and point of contact for District 214-related comms and programming
- End-to-end deliverable and rollout of inaugural "State of the Community" forward-looking leadership event
- Increased enrollment 61% for summer camps (**preseason revenue of \$80K**), recreation segments (**+30%**)
- Fostered relationships with state legislators, representing at **Parks Day at the Capitol**
- Executed Heritage Park Grand Opening event, a \$33M reclamation, **1.5K attendees**

MARKETING SPECIALIST, Mundelein Park & Recreation District (Mundelein, IL), 2008 - 2015

- Created strategies increasing brand awareness; **enrollment (+35%), Health/Fitness (+30%)**
- Community liaison, planning, coordinating rollout of co-hosted events
- Sponsorship development, securing partnerships with companies including **Abbott and Medline**
- Planned publicity, produced presentations, managed campaigns, monitored performance
- Created grassroots-type engagement campaigns (**Best Park ranking**)
- CMS, social media, trade publications and grant writing

FRACTIONAL MARKETING & COMMS CONSULTANT, Village of Antioch, 2016 - 2020

Led VoA's marketing, branding and public relations initiatives; served as PIO during the pandemic and reopening; co-editor of "Connections" magazine, serving three northern Lake County communities, established the Antioch Downtown Economic Development Task Force and the "AllTogether" brand for restaurant and retail vitalization.

FOUNDATIONAL MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE

Marketing Specialist, Lake County Forest Preserve District

- Planned and executed initiatives to reach audiences through multi-channels including media support and press relations, social media, direct mail, referenda, surveys, public input/open house/master planning participation
- Executed grand openings/VIP events to introduce the **31K+ acres** of open space, facilities and programs
- Created award-winning submissions that resulted in being recognized as **best in parks, facilities and design**
- Solidified **over \$1M in free media** along with negotiating more than **\$50K in sponsorships** (concerts & events)

EDUCATION: Seton Hall University, BA, Communications