

Brian Solem

contact

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education

Loyola University Chicago:
Bachelor of Arts in English

skills

Budgeting
Client outreach
Community event planning
Copy editing
Marketing
Media relations
Partnership development
Print production
Project management
Racial equity and justice
Social media management
State- and federal-level
policy and advocacy
Team leadership
Website development
Writing and reporting

career

FGMA

Digital Marketing and Communications Director, 2024-present

Oversee Demand Generation marketing efforts for a \$41 million municipal architecture firm with eight offices in five states. Strategize and execute projects and campaigns to support nine markets and four geographical regions.

Key highlights

- Developed and implemented content marketing strategy, creating results-netting shifts in original content on digital channels
- Nurture two-person team to develop internal and external campaigns centered on audience-tailored content
- Reformed and rolled out firm-wide brand guidelines and style guide; implemented design enhancements with marketing team through trainings and review sessions
- Launched advertising campaigns through Meta and Google advertising products to increase social media and website engagement and expand brand awareness
- Developed firm-wide messaging framework with comprehensive rollout to leadership and full firm

SLOW FOOD USA

Director, Communications, 2021-2023

Director, Communications and Advocacy, 2024

Inspire a network of food justice advocates advancing good, clean and fair food for all through creative content marketing strategies. Support over 80 chapters and six committees on their outreach and branding efforts. Engage and educate an audience of 500,000+ digital followers. Harness food policy experts and national partnerships to advance advocacy efforts. Supervise three-person communications and food policy team.

Key highlights

- Produced first-ever Biodiversity Advocacy Day, which educated and mobilized activists to call their legislators to demand an equitable Farm Bill. This day-long activation featured a webinar panel with thought leaders and Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME).
- Transitioned 12 local food award programs into a single, unified national program called Snail of Approval, complete with rollout campaign, interactive map and print marketing resources.
- Opened a development and training community of practice for over 40 marketers, communicators and creatives in the network.
- Launched global LGBTQ2S+ Affinity Group to build in-person and virtual programming to support queer food professionals.
- Refreshed 16-person Food and Farm Policy team and obtained grants to fund a comprehensive policy strategy and grassroots mobilization plan for Farm Bill and federal food policy advocacy.

top 10 tools

1. Adobe Creative Cloud (especially Photoshop, Premiere Pro, InDesign, Illustrator, and Acrobat)
2. WordPress
3. Salesforce
4. Google Analytics
5. Meta for Business
6. Asana
7. AP Stylebook
8. Campaign Monitor
9. Luminare Online
10. Slack

community

- Co-founder and point person for Portage Park Mutual Aid, a relationship-based support system in Portage Park in response to COVID-19, 2020-2024
- Co-founder and member of racial equity and justice collective DRIVE 45th Ward, 2020-2022
- Dill Pickle Food Co-op Director and Vice President, 2016-2017
- Politically active with aldermanic and state representative campaigns through canvassing, phone banking, fundraising and strategizing, 2014-present

AIDS FOUNDATION CHICAGO

Senior Director, Communications, 2015-2021

Communications Manager and Staff Writer, 2014-2015

Led internal and external communications strategies for Illinois' largest HIV and AIDS service organization. Mentored five professionals to serve as a creative agency supporting 11 internal clients. Strengthened the organizational brand and amplified voices of people living with and impacted by HIV and homelessness.

Key highlights

- Expanded two-person team in 2014 to a five-person team, advocating for and creating roles focused on content creation, digital strategy and grassroots advocacy engagement.
- Built internal creative agency strategy through relationship management, ticketing system, standards guides and innovative approaches to marketing challenges and complex clients.
- Co-led communications and marketing efforts for Getting to Zero Illinois, a bold initiative to end new cases of HIV by 2030.
- Achieved consistent growth in social engagement across core brand channels and 15 supplemental brand channels.
- Supported ideation and production on more than 80 stories on aidschicago.org's News and Inside Story blog each year.
- Collaborated on agency-wide equity, inclusion and justice endeavors through the Racial and Social Justice Committee.
- Developed organizational style guide and update process to embolden communities we serve through affirming language.
- Collaborated with external PR agency to earn more than 600 earned media mentions per year, reaching millions of people in Chicago, Illinois, and across the U.S.

GRAZE

Co-founder and publisher, 2011-2015

Oversaw budgeting, business planning and retailer relationship development for semi-annual literary magazine. Reviewed submissions, supervised art director and associate editor, and oversaw print production. Managed and updated digital platforms including website, YouTube channel and X (Twitter) feed.

Key highlights

- Published original written work by 135 writers and original visual art by 111 artists across 692 pages in eight print issues.
- Developed relationships (directly or through our distributor) with 64 retailers across 20 states that stocked Graze.
- Hosted 50-200 people at 16 Graze-sponsored food and literary events over four years.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN BENEFIT TRUST

Manager of Publications, 2009-2014

Coordinated content, editing and design for five quarterly and monthly newsletters and three annual publications focused on retirement planning, health care and investments. Led complete website development project, generated email blasts and monitored analytics. Provided all written content and copy editing for direct member correspondence, marketing materials and press releases.