

Warner Johnston

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San Francisco, California

Innovative Public Relations & MarComms Leader

Strategic Campaign Development | Brand Awareness Planning | Crisis Communications Management

A **forward-thinking, result-oriented C-level executive**, demonstrating proficiency in PR and MarComms, who elevates brand visibility, navigates crises, and drives impact and awareness by staying abreast of the ever-evolving digital and media landscape while delivering integrated strategic solutions. A valued member of executive teams and boards, recognized for exceptional communication skills, fostering collaboration and consensus at all levels. Shows expertise in crisis management, ensuring clear and effective communication during high-stress events.

- **Compelling Communication.** Increased positive media coverage and facilitated B2B marketing and relationship building with Fortune 500 companies for ACCA and the City & State of New York.
- **Strategic Planning.** Designed annual PR campaigns that elevated brands, including I LOVE NEW YORK, Erie Canal Harbor, Governor's Island, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and Lower Manhattan Development.
- **Program Development.** Developed industry events, including an annual cybersecurity forum with thousands of participants; partnered with dozens of major universities, global companies, and top-tier media brands.
- **Team Building.** Track record of building high-performing teams that boost engagement and drive business outcomes; received multiple awards for management and leadership style.

A Portfolio of Competencies that Facilitate Top and Bottom-Line Performance

- Advocacy
- Branding
- Social Media
- Leadership
- Digital Marketing
- Strategic Alliances
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Media Relations
- SEO & SEM Strategy

Career Experience

5 BOROUGH COMMUNICATIONS | Founder & Principal

2021 to present

5 Borough Communications, an integrated communications agency specializing in designing scalable communications offices, developing in-house capabilities, and raising awareness. Currently serving a diverse clientele, including startups, non-profits, wealth managers, and service industry providers.

- Orchestrate media campaigns that align with clients' image and goals, yielding an average increase in social engagement by 25% and media coverage by 35%.
- Establish compelling brand identities for businesses across statewide markets and targeted marketing communications to reach new audiences and grow impact.
- Develop strategic communications plans to foster business growth, raise visibility, and optimize outreach efforts while boosting efficiency and achieving cost savings.
- Create and optimize client digital footprint for an enhanced user experience, improving site traffic and user satisfaction by over 40%.

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ASSOCIATION OF CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS (ACCA)

2011 to 2021

Headquartered in the UK, ACCA is the largest global association of financial professionals and accountants, with over 800,000 members and students across 179 countries, embracing the principles of inclusion and opportunity.

USA Country Director | Head of External Affairs

Recruited to open and manage the first US office, hiring and coaching key staff, implementing a tactical management plan, and promoting sustainable growth and brand recognition within the USA.

- Nurtured partnerships with Fortune 500 companies, top-tier media brands, government entities, local regulators, and policy influencers to create new business opportunities and enhance brand recognition.
- Generated 34% of the company's global media coverage through campaign design and oversight.
- Achieved 200% growth in recruits by initiating a university partnership program with 12 top-tier business schools across the USA.
- Realized savings of 40% over the past three years by introducing new technologies and efficiencies, allowing for reinvestment into market and PR activity.
- Served as interim Director for Canada & Caribbean offices, leading local employees while meeting targets.
- Received the prestigious annual Chief Executive Award for Diversity and Top Manager Award; chaired the international LGBTQIA+ committee.

NYS EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

2007 to 2011

The ESDC is New York State's chief economic vehicle and shoulders the responsibility of nurturing the state's economy, spurring business investment and job creation, and sustaining local economies.

Vice President of Public Affairs

Rapid career advancement from Downstate Director to Vice President, managing three statewide offices and directly reporting to the Chairman.

- Planned and implemented strategic growth initiatives, overhauled the public affairs office, and handled operations as Chief Spokesperson and advisor to the Governor's Office, Chairs, Board of Directors, and department heads.
- Orchestrated integrated communication campaigns for well-known brands, including I LOVE NEW YORK, Erie Canal Harbor, Governor's Island, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and Lower Manhattan Development, bolstering brand visibility and engagement.
- Initiated top-tier media placement campaigns (paid and earned), considering the impact of key business drivers and analyzing statewide and regional interests.
- Identified and fostered partnerships with media organizations across diverse platforms (print, broadcast, radio, and online), broadening organizational reach.
- Expanded market footprint through strategic planning, media engagement initiatives, and leveraging social technology and internal/external communications.
- Launched an online business portal for New York State, consolidating over 100 agencies' resources, grants, and tax credits, noticeably boosting accessibility for businesses statewide.
- Executed town halls, editorial board meetings, and speaking engagements with policymakers and civic groups for Chairs, cultivating productive relationships and strategic partnerships.

Education

Master of Public Administration (MPA), New York University

Master of Social Work / Psychotherapy (MSW), New York University

Bachelor of Science (BS), Health Science, New York College at Brockport