

KSA Summary

Project & Team Management

My experience in academia and government has given me the opportunity to work with both large- and small-scale teams comprised of students, interns, full time employees and contractors. I am consistently successful in planning and executing large projects with limited resources and have a proven track record for leading teams in high-stress, fast-paced environments inside the Federal Government. Because of my unique background, I am able to lead integrated project teams that bridge the technical and artistic divide, combining creativity and logic to solve complex communication challenges.

Planning & Strategy

No matter what position or title I have held, I have always been involved in the planning and strategy of large and small projects. I am often described as an “idea person,” with a head for quick, client-oriented solutions, as well as long-term strategies. I have served on strategic planning committees and been responsible for authoring several long- and short-term strategic plans. During my federal career, I have led strategy sessions for the Department of Defense and the Department of Education, and also worked with multiple agencies, departments, and the White House to plan, develop and execute a wide variety of communications projects. At USDA, I focus on strategic communications, frequently managing media relations and acting as a spokesperson for my agency and its programs.

Budget & Contracts

As part of IT management and as a team leader, I have had responsibility for writing SOPs, SOWs, RFPs, and assessing contract bids. I have served on several technical evaluation boards and enterprise-solution selection committees. I have also worked with COTRs to evaluate and set deliverables for contracts, and have managed a Web Support Team budget as well as contract budgets.

Design, Illustration & Branding

I have a strong talent for design. I bring a critical eye to all design work, but as a team lead and brand manager I have used that critical eye to guide and shape veteran and novice designers through large and small projects. In Government, my approach has been mostly non-government in style, using and applying corporate design principles to reshape the identity and public perception of departments and offices. I have been responsible for branding from the ground up--designing logos, style guides, and preserving it from print to web to video graphics--and I have also managed established brands.

User Interface Design & Information Architecture

From my roots working on Human-Machine Interfaces (factory touch-screens) for an engineering firm to more recent GUI/WUI design, I have used consistency and logical information architecture to ensure that sites, applications, and learning objects marry usability and aesthetics to create positive user experiences.

Usability, Accessibility & 508 Compliance

Throughout my career I have been responsible for meeting Federal and State 508 compliance requirements, often leading remediation and testing efforts. Versed in usability/accessibility guidelines and best practices, I often serve as a consultant for designers and web application developers, mapping out solutions for usability and compliance issues.

Profile

I am a born salesman with stellar people skills. Never intimidated, I enjoy working with clients and in-house development teams to achieve project goals and meet deadlines. I thrive in environments that challenge me and encourage me to explore new solutions while taking advantage of my pre-existing knowledge of design and marketing, and my ability to create the perfect marriage between technology and communication. I am a Web Expert--fluent in design, HTML, CSS, social media, comprehensive online strategy and in love with what I can achieve in digital mediums.

Work Experience

Web Content Manager/Deputy Director Public Affairs (GS 14) 5/11 - present

Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Washington, DC

Transitioning from a health and wellness focus to the world of agriculture, I became a team lead and deputy director of public affairs. Within the first 60 days I worked with existing staff to establish a social media/new media strategy, capitalizing on the Department's existing blog, Facebook, and Twitter accounts to accomplish our outreach and communications goals.

At the start of our coordinated effort, 'Afghanistan' appeared in the Department blog, but our own agency name did not. We are now consistently within the top 3 blogs (based on pageviews) each week, sometimes having two out of the top three stories across the Department. As part of this strategy, I developed process and structure for using social media cohesively instead of piecemeal, taking time up-front to identify the influencers we wanted to reach in each medium and measuring our effectiveness after each roll out.

In addition to my web and new media focus, I am leading the agency effort to improve internal communications, using technology and some 'non-government' approaches to reach a diverse, nation-wide workforce.

As deputy director, I have served as acting director for short and long periods of time. This includes acting as a spokesperson for the agency and its programs. I also develop strategies and best practices, lead brainstorming activities, handle the majority of documentation and process creation, as well as staffing and administrative responsibilities.

I also am involved in branding and design projects, working with an inter-agency task force to create a cohesive [branding/marketing strategy](#) for the Department's Agroforestry center, and creating [infographics](#) to help better convey our facts and data to a wider public audience.

Technical Information Specialist/Design Team Lead (GS 13) 10/09 - 5/11

Department of Health & Human Services, Washington, DC

Joining the fast-paced Web Communications & New Media Division supporting the Office of the Secretary, I was initially the site manager for HHS.gov, the Secretary and Deputy Secretary Sites, and HealthReform.gov. Writing, approving, and coordinating assets, I took items through clearance and worked with developers and subject matter experts to keep the sites up to date and to strategize about site goals and expansions.

Within my first three months I was asked to shape and develop a design team that could better support both day-to-day web site graphic needs as well as larger redesign efforts of current sites and ground-up designs of new sites. Adding this new team lead responsibility to my site management role demanded more efficient methods for accomplishing all goals and day-to-day tasks. Beginning with one contractor and myself, I built processes for daily graphic requests and task tracking, a pool of common design assets, prioritization levels, and developed templates to simplify the production of routine graphics. As we became more efficient, the demand for graphic and design support increased--both in the complexity and volume of requests. The team continued to expand in personnel as well as scope of responsibility.

I also worked with teams of contractors and support staff to explore new methods for approaching our web projects, dovetailing contractor strengths in usability and site development with my team's design and content expertise to find the right balance of skills and talent to accomplish project goals. This allowed us to produce quality digital products in as short a timeframe as possible without compromising user experience.

Because many of the sites and efforts we worked on involved larger branding efforts, my team created supporting products like event displays, banners, brochures, take-away items, online widgets. Healthcare.gov, Vaccines.gov, Flu.gov, Letsmove.gov, and Foodsafety.gov are all sites that my team created and/or supported.

Web Specialist (GS 12)

4/08 - 10/09

Department of Defense Education Activity, Arlington, VA

Stepping outside of IT and returning to the world of public relations, I joined the Office of Communications at the Department of Defense Education Activity headquarters. Bringing a wealth of web expertise and experience to the table, I also proved invaluable as a strategic planner, print designer, writer, and editor. Often paired with subject matter experts and event planners, I created numerous sites for agency-wide campaigns and special observances, and also designed the 2009-2010 award-winning DoDEA annual report.

My primary client office was the Partnership Branch, a group working to bridge the gap between DoDEA and the public schools serving over 80% of the military dependent children around the globe. To fulfill their outreach and communication strategies, I designed, developed, and maintained the Military K-12 Partners website, providing news, research, and resources to the community supporting military dependents. In addition to the website, I designed and developed printed materials, presentations, and marketing/awareness materials to support the goals and mission of this new DoDEA Branch and establish the Partnership brand.

Beyond my web and design responsibilities for the Partnership, I lead planning sessions for an MOU between the Department of Defense and Department of Education, taking the group through the development of their strategic plan and breaking each goal down into actionable items for subcommittees. I also provided support for larger Communications Team efforts--creating news & informational video products by working in the studio, editing scripts, acting, and producing graphics for various productions. As a small communications team, it was important that we be able to fulfill various roles in the studio, and I also handled the sound board for several tapings and provided voiceover work for promotional products.

Webmaster/Web Support Team Director

7/06 - 4/08

St. Mary's College of Maryland St. Mary's City, MD

For over 18 months I was the driving force behind the movement to reclaim the College's website. Sites with convoluted editing methods, unintuitive design and out of date information, combined with a lack of cohesive navigation, often left users feeling trapped and ruined the College's ability to communicate effectively with a world that uses the web as its main source of information.

In August of 2007 my team launched a new site (<http://www.smcm.edu>) and reclaimed the web space. The new site showcases my own graphic design, information organization, user interface, branding incorporation, and HTML/CSS code. Beyond the technical and artistic contributions I made, the site is a testament to my ability to "herd cats" by leading a College-wide committee comprised of community members with their own ideas and agendas through a series of decision-making activities to produce a cohesive and mutually beneficial web site that is cross-browser and cross-platform compatible.

In addition to the redesign initiative, I acted as a College liaison for vendors, design firms, and alum contributors, as well as the project manager for all web initiatives. In parallel to these larger efforts, I built the Web Support Team from scratch hiring and shaping a combination of FTE programmers and student interns (including two scholarship positions) into a system of support that is still in place today. As the head of this team I established

business processes, perfected workflows and was responsible for the web budget and contract documentation (RFPs, SOWs, SOPs, etc).

Another responsibility of my team was the deeper technical aspects of running the websites. To this end, I managed 2 Windows 2003 servers, 3 Apple X-Serves, and was a key member of the Senior Management of the College's centralized IT structure. In this capacity I was involved in strategic IT decisions affecting campus-wide support and working on various committees to ensure that IT goals were in line with the College Strategic Plan. To fulfill the College's need to move forward and keep up with website demands, I also led the effort to evaluate and select an enterprise-level Web Content Management System and was responsible for the implementation and support of the WCMS.

Academic Computing Specialist II

1/05 - 7/06

UConn Health Center Farmington, CT

Lured by the promise of being part of a team that develops online teaching modules and curriculum solutions for faculty and students, I left the main campus of the University of Connecticut and headed to the Health Center. I produced interactive learning objects that supported specific curriculum goals and pedagogies. In addition, I worked with medical students & faculty to create web-based community outreach projects, established all How-To and FAQ material for using technology with the curriculum, prepared and created digital resources for lectures, edited supporting multimedia files, and provided technical support for 23 high-tech classrooms and 5 high-tech lecture halls. I was also the department consultant for database design, web application development, project planning, CGI scripting, web solutions, and handheld computing (Pocket PCs).

Webmaster/Graphic Artist III

5/99 - 1/05

Research & Graduate Education, University of Connecticut Storrs, CT

I was hired by Research & Graduate Education at the University of Connecticut to help them establish a web presence. My background in marketing, journalism, and HTML helped me shape their initial online efforts into usable tools for faculty and students. Within the first six months my responsibilities grew from three basic information pages to 17 in-depth web sites with rich online tools that vastly changed the way the research and graduate communities conducted day-to-day business. I met with department heads and deans to hash out strategies and identify the goals and target audiences for each site. All along the way I sought out new tools, approaches, and skills to keep us in the forefront of technology and compliant with state and federal standards/practices. As the depth of our sites and online tools grew, my team of one grew to include graduate assistant designers and programmers.

Marketing Assistant

10/97 - 4/99

Bachelor Controls Lenexa, KS

At BCI I honed my multi-tasking skills. Hired for my knowledge of HTML, my responsibilities ended up being wide and varied, encompassing general things like handling all office correspondence, filing, greeting visitors & answering phones. I also set up templates for office documents, researched hardware for the engineers, performed background checks on new hires, maintained the office petty cash & other accounting, designed the user interfaces for several client projects, and worked with the marketing director to develop lit packs and other marketing assets. The bulk of my remaining time was spent designing and developing the company website.

Education

Magazine Journalism - University of Kansas Lawrence, KS 8/95 - 6/98 (3 years toward degree)

Skills & Abilities

- HTML: Expert, Currently used/15 years
- CSS: Expert, Currently used/7 years

- Java Script: Intermediate, Currently used/7 years
- Adobe Dreamweaver: Expert, Currently used/11 years
- Adobe Fireworks: Expert, Currently used/8 years
- Adobe Photoshop: Expert, Currently used/10 years
- Adobe Acrobat: Expert, Currently used/11 years
- Adobe Indesign: Expert, Currently used/6 years
- Adobe Illustrator: Expert, Currently used/5 years
- Flash: Beginner, Currently used/4 years
- PHP: Intermediate, 1 year ago/6 years
- Perl: Intermediate, 5 years ago/2 years
- MySQL/SQL: Intermediate, 1 year ago/5 years
- Linux/Unix Administrator: Intermediate, 1 year ago/4 years
- Linux/Unix User: Intermediate, 1 year ago/10 years
- Mac OS X: Expert, Currently used/5 years
- Windows XP: Expert, 1 year ago/4 years
- Windows 2003: Intermediate, 4 years ago/2 years
- Microsoft Office Suite (cross platform): Expert, Currently used/11 years
- Internet Tools/Applications (FTP, SSH, Email, etc): Expert, Currently used/15 years

Additional Experience/Expertise & Training

- Google Analytics IQ Qualified
- Plain language training
- 508 compliance for higher education training
- Visualizing data (Edward Tufte course)
- Customer service training (from Disney)
- Fluent in Compression Planning and similar methods to keep meetings active & productive and projects moving forward
- Experience selecting enterprise-level Content Management Systems at three large institutions & developing the implementation plans

Awards

- Secretary's Honor Award for Excellence (2012), *USDA's Safe Foods Family multimedia campaign*
- National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) award for Excellence in Design (2009-2010), *DoDEA Annual Report*