

Contact

614-309-4147 (Mobile)
jennifer.fening@gmail.com

www.linkedin.com/in/
jennifermcquiston (LinkedIn)

Top Skills

Account Management
Competitive Analysis
Media Relations

Jennifer Fening

Deputy Director, Department of Development- City of Columbus
Columbus, Ohio Metropolitan Area

Summary

I am a communicator and strategist with public sector, corporate and agency experience. As a Deputy Director in the City of Columbus' Department of Development, I design and implement communications and community engagement strategies that are helping Columbus double the number of homes built in the Columbus Region over the next 15 years, update the city's 70-year-old zoning code to promote equitable growth, create jobs for Columbus residents and reimagine the city's public art.

Industry Awards & Recognition

Managed communications for Smart Columbus' electric vehicle adoption program, integrating advertising; experiential marketing; media, social media and influencer relations; community events and an owner advocacy program. The regional program resulted in 3,458 EVs sold (108% of goal) and a 20% increase in consumer likelihood to purchase. 2020 SABRE Awards- finalist.

Led the repositioning of the Bernzomatic brand and re-launched it to a broader set of consumers through an integrated marketing strategy consisting of public relations, social media, content development, community relations, digital marketing and more. The strategy enabled the business to capture additional revenue and fend off competition, and increased brand awareness by 13% and likelihood to purchase by 22%. 2017 Global SABRE Awards- 2nd Place / 2017 North American SABRE Awards- Best in Show / 2017 Silver Anvil-winner / 2017 PRWeek Awards- finalist.

Enabled Donate Life Ohio to achieve 107% of its donor registration goal, exceed statewide donor registration records and save lives by directing an integrated campaign encouraging Ohioans to register as organ donors. 2014 PRWeek Awards- finalist / 2014 Central Ohio PRSA Prism Awards- Nonprofit Best of Show.

An agency partner nominated their engagement in the 2016 Content Marketing Awards in the category of Agency/Client Partnership—an award recognizing “productive harmony” and strong collaboration between an organization and an agency partner. We didn’t make the shortlist, but I was proud to lead a team acknowledged for productive, fearless collaboration.

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Experience

City of Columbus

Deputy Director

July 2021 - Present (2 years 6 months)

Columbus, Ohio Metropolitan Area

Smart Columbus

Director, Marketing Communications

July 2017 - June 2021 (4 years)

Columbus, Ohio Metropolitan Area

- Directed brand strategy and integrated communications in support of Smart Columbus’ mission to improve quality of life, safety, sustainability and economic development in Central Ohio by transforming mobility behaviors and access to transportation.
- Led a team of three full-time staff and three interns and counseled the senior leadership team.
- Managed communications for the 2017-2020 electric vehicle (EV) adoption program, which included a digital advertising campaign; experiential ride and drive program; media, social media and influencer relations; community events and an owner advocacy program. The regional program generated 18.6M impressions, attracted 30,000 Experience Center visitors and generated 12,400 EV test drives, and resulted in 3,458 EVs sold (108% of goal) and a 20% increase in consumer likelihood to purchase.
- Developed and executed the communications strategy for Smart Circuit, Ohio’s first autonomous vehicle, to help build public trust in self-driving vehicle technology. Education campaign drove 16,000 rides.
- Executed the public and media opening of the Smart Columbus Experience Center, including a ribbon cutting by local dignitaries and educational engagements for residents. Opening attracted 900 residents and generated 1M+ local media impressions.

- Oversaw learning exchanges to share program findings with residents and peer organizations. Activities included 200 speaking engagements by key spokespeople, 100+ visits from peer cities, maintenance of a “playbook” blog with 60,000 unique readers and creation of a 16-page feature in Columbus CEO.

Worthington Industries

Category Marketing Manager

July 2014 - July 2017 (3 years 1 month)

Columbus, Ohio Area

- Directed brand and marketing strategy for the company’s Consumer Products business unit encompassing the Bernzomatic and Balloon Time brands with more than 100 retail SKUs.
- Orchestrated the re-positioning and re-launch of the Bernzomatic brand to broaden appeal to new consumer segments. The consumer insight-driven brand strategy enabled the business to earn a 15% price increase, grow sales and defend against competition at a major retailer.
- Led the Bernzomatic integrated marketing strategy, leveraging public relations, trade advertising, digital marketing, social media, influencer relations, content marketing, search engine marketing, special events, community relations, employee engagement and other tactics. In two years, the program increased brand awareness by 13%, increased brand favorability by 20%, increased likelihood to purchase by 22% and decreased top barrier to entry by 30% among target consumers.
- Directed the creation, launch and execution of public relations programs including the Find Your Fire Community Grants Program with brand ambassador Nicole Curtis and the Bernzomatic Torch Bearers influencer relations program.
- Oversaw the development of the brand’s digital strategy to enable lead capture, marketing automation, retargeting and advanced analytics.
- Responsible for issues management strategy for products regulated by government agencies. Served as brand spokesperson with media.
- Sat on General Manager’s cross-functional Strategy Steering Committee tasked with analyzing unmet consumer needs and developing and launching new products to market. Owned consumer engagement along all touchpoints on the consumer journey, including product and brand awareness/ZMOT, packaging and merchandising/FMOT, product education and experience/SMOT and brand loyalty and advocacy/TMOT.

Fahlgren Mortine

4 years 2 months

Associate Vice President

August 2013 - July 2014 (1 year)

Columbus, Ohio Area

- Planned and directed award-winning integrated marketing communications campaigns leveraging tactics including public relations; analyst relations; television, print, online, and outdoor advertising; brand planning; social media engagement; content marketing; collateral development; crisis communications; primary and secondary research; in-person and online events and web design.
- Managed accounts valued at up to \$2 million for business-to-business, business-to-consumer, public health and non-profit clients including Ansell, Donate Life Ohio, Emerson Network Power, Nova Southeastern University and the Ohio Department of Health. Quadrupled the size and scope of a key account in one year by exceeding measurable goals, offering sound strategic counsel and delivering outstanding client service.
- Managed agency teams of up to 50 people across multiple office locations. Managed two full-time associates, mentored junior account leaders, led the Fahlgren Mortine University steering committee and created a peer-to-peer internal recognition program.

Account Director

December 2011 - August 2013 (1 year 9 months)

Columbus, Ohio

Account manager for IT and non-profit clients, overseeing account teams ranging from three to 12 members in size and \$100,000 to \$1.1 million in budget. Responsible for strategic planning, crisis counsel, messaging, financial management, measurement and execution for public relations, social media, creative and digital campaigns.

Account Supervisor

June 2010 - December 2011 (1 year 7 months)

Account manager for IT, research and non-profit clients. Responsible for strategic and crisis counsel, financial management, measurement and execution for public relations, social media, creative and digital campaigns.

Fahlgren Mortine

2 years 10 months

Senior Account Executive

July 2008 - June 2010 (2 years)

Account lead for a multiple business-to-business and technology clients responsible for strategic planning, traditional and social media relations initiatives, analyst relations, content development, executive and customer coaching, promotions and industry events.

Account Executive

September 2007 - July 2008 (11 months)

Account executive responsible for managing webcast production, event communications, copywriting, case study prospecting and industry awards programs. Developed and executed crisis communications strategy for the Columbus Symphony Orchestra. Executed media relations strategy for the Capital Area Humane Society's "Be an AdvoCAT" campaign, recognized by Central Ohio PRSA with a Crisis Communications PRism.

Weber Shandwick

1 year 4 months

Account Executive

May 2007 - August 2007 (4 months)

Cleveland market field lead and New York market representative responsible for grassroots outreach and media relations for the US Federal Reserve Banks and US Department of the Treasury's Go Direct campaign. Pitched proactive and responsive news stories for multiple corporate communications clients with pickup in mainstream and trade publications.

Assistant Account Executive

September 2006 - May 2007 (9 months)

Coordinated media relations, partner recruitment, collateral production and program logistics for Go Direct special events including New York City Coalition Meeting and New York media launch

Post-Graduate Intern

May 2006 - September 2006 (5 months)

Pitched news and feature story ideas to print, broadcast and radio outlets plus trade publications. Compiled editorial calendars, media lists, clip reports and research for law firm, food manufacturing, agribusiness and government clients and new business prospects.

Education

Northwestern University

Bachelor's of Science in Journalism, second major in political science, minor in business institutions · (2002 - 2006)