

# Lia Blanchard

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## Professional Summary

Communicator and strategist dedicated to informing and engaging employees while strengthening company culture. Understands the challenge of doing so for employees with different duties and daily work experiences (e.g., traditional hours vs. shift work, represented vs. non-represented, computer-bound vs. deskless, backend vs. frontline). Excellent people skills; easily maintains relationships with stakeholders and colleagues at all levels.

## Experience

### **Community Transit**

**2017-present**

#### **Internal Communications Specialist**

**Everett, WA**

- Deploys strategic employee communications through a variety of channels: print, web-based, SaaS, digital signage, social media, and virtual and in-person events
- Raised employee engagement scores in one year, some by double-digit percentages
- Received employee Excellence Award for outstanding work keeping employees informed and engaged during a prolonged period of crisis and constant change
- During pandemic, led project to acquire and develop a SaaS solution to challenge of reaching frontline, deskless, and office/home-based employees all at once
- Ensures that internal messaging is on-brand and exemplifies agency's core values

### **Makazab Media, LLC**

**2012-2018**

#### **Owner**

**Marysville, WA**

- Owner/sole employee of successful online-based business, working from home
- Freelance services: combined interviewing and storytelling skills to create powerful long-form business content and brand development materials
- Consultant services: created customized social media training and digital marketing plans

### **YMCA of Snohomish County**

**2009-2012**

#### **Marketing Coordinator**

**Everett, WA**

- Implemented internal communications program with quarterly employee newsletter
- Formed and led team of branch marketing staff to plan each branch's marketing collateral
- Developed social media program for entire Association, building community for members and employees through a network that included Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and a blog
- Coordinated implementation of new Y brand, redesigning the website, in-branch collateral, various newsletters, external and internal signage, executing live kick-off event
- Assisted Marketing and Communications Director with media relations, crisis communication, publishing, advertising, reports, community relations and events

**Art of Appreciation Gourmet Gift Baskets** **2005-2009**  
**General Manager** **Arlington, WA**

- Produced all marketing for small business whose earnings increased 10x during this time
- Designed graphic ads chosen by Amazon to run across the entire Amazon.com site
- Supervised payroll, customer service, and shipping personnel

**Bolt Media, Inc.** **2000-2003**  
**Digital Community Manager** **Remote**

- Managed digital communities (chat rooms and message boards) of interest to teens

**Alexis Travel** **1998-1999**  
**Digital Media Manager & Disney Specialist** **Herndon, VA**

- Designed and built website from scratch
- Designed travel packages; marketed them online with print collateral and event marketing

**America Online** **1996-1998**  
**Promotions Assistant (1997-1998)** **Vienna, VA**

**Community Action Team Member (1996-1997)**

- Produced digital promotional events and materials for Digital City National (became Patch)
- Single-handedly created AOL's library of email responses to common customer inquiries

## Education

**M.A. English** **2016**  
Emphasis in Writing **Fort Hays State University**

**B.A. Communications** **1994**  
Media Relations concentration, *magna cum laude* **Fort Hays State University**

## Areas of Expertise

- Exceptional writer with the ability to adapt voice, format, and style as needed
- Talent for "translating" complex issues into concise but easy-to-understand language
- Described by executive leadership as "incredibly collaborative" and "a quiet leader"
- A "connector" by nature; enjoys connecting people who can help each other
- Meticulous attention to detail
- Effective public speaker with background in Toastmasters

## Current Professional Affiliations

- Snohomish County Public Information Network (SnoPIN)
- Ragan Communications
- APTA Marketing & Communications Committee
- WSTA Marketing & Communications Committee
- Yearly "guest PIO" at Evergreen State Fair