

Communications Manager

Core information

Location: London head office ▾ Bracknell head office ▾		Lines of business or shared capability area: Communications
Reports to: Senior Communications Manager		
People Management: Yes ▾		
Assignment Management: No ▾		
Partnership Level: Partnership level 6 ▾		Manager's Partnership level: Partnership level 5 ▾
Number of direct reports: Up to six		Partnership level(s) of direct reports: Partnership level 7 ▾

About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands – John Lewis and Waitrose, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business, though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique Purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world.** Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to Happier People, Happier Business and a Happier World.

Critical purpose of the role

The External Communications team is responsible for all aspects of the external communications strategy for the Partnership and its two brands. Our clear ambition for communications: to be the conscience of the business and champion of the brands.

This business purpose is brought to life through the role of communications and campaigning. With communications disciplines that work effectively with other business departments to ensure integration of communications across the company, working together for maximum impact. As a communications team we work on multiple fronts, with a communications programme that leverages progressive business initiatives, builds celebratory feel good moments, campaigns with passion from a position of strength, scale and responsibility, maintains a drumbeat of positive storytelling, and works hard to mitigate potential risks. Activity must continue to reach multiple audiences, amplifying and deepening customer marketing activity and messaging delivered above the line.

As Communications Manager you will sit within the media relations team which is responsible for managing incoming media calls

You will play a key role in protecting and enhancing the reputation of the Partnership and its brands by providing an excellent media management service.

You will help the business to identify potential risks, as well as opportunities to promote the Partnership.

You will play a key role in preparing for issues and crises, working with senior leaders in the business

Through your Profession you will have the opportunity to develop and stretch personally and professionally to achieve your



potential.

The Partnership supports agile and flexible working practices, such as when, where and how we work. We have several different ways to work flexibly, including part-time, flexible or compressed hours, and job sharing. Head office areas also support a blended working approach.

We celebrate diversity and inclusion in the John Lewis Partnership and we are committed to becoming the UK's most inclusive business, reflecting and connecting with the diverse communities that we serve.

Primary Outcomes & Accountabilities

Manage the incoming media calls collaborating with senior managers and other members of the communications team.

Plan for issues and crises by drafting appropriate communications materials - collaborating with internal stake.

Work with the customer services team on emerging social media issues.

Provide counsel to senior spokespeople on short and long-term opportunities and challenges, and coach through media interviews. Establish and maintain key stakeholder relationships and develop in depth knowledge within the relevant areas.

With the Senior Communications Manager, develop and maintain a network of external stakeholders including journalists and opinion formers.

Use awareness of the external landscape to make informed decisions about communications risks and opportunities. Horizon scanning for potential risks and reputational issues, working with relevant teams to mitigate such risk.

Ensure the correct process is in place and is adhered to for media enquiries, and that enquiries are handled consistently across the business. Delivers an excellent, thorough and timely service to journalists in response to their enquiries.

Deputise for Senior Communications Manager when required.

Champion and promote the Sustainability, Ethics and Purpose story as part of the overall strategic brand narrative.

Act in accordance with the Partnership's purpose and democratic principles, constructively participating in co-ownership, and demonstrating to customers and each other that it is a better way of doing business. Share your knowledge, experiences, ideas and opinion to improve the Partnership, speaking honestly and frequently.

Invest in your personal and professional development to achieve your potential, by doing more, doing better, or doing different. Continuously engage with and actively contribute to your Profession.

Measures of success

Project deadlines met, communications materials consistent and thorough and standards are set and met.

Clear evaluation at the end of each project.

Excellent pool of media contacts, regular contact, recommendations made and campaigns initiated.

Maintains an informed opinion and up to date knowledge of the area. External awareness is translated into communications strategies.

Enquiries are always dealt with and the right people involved.

At times you will be required to attend your work location or another Partnership location, for reasons such as meetings. The frequency can be discussed with your People Manager.

Skills

Media Relations

Interacts with respect and friendliness to convey views with clarity and empathy. Faces into differences of opinion and surfaces these constructively and works collaboratively to agree a shared solution with lasting results. Used with a good understanding of how the media operates, a natural flair for news coupled with excellent judgement.

Senior Stakeholder Management

Identifies who is impacted by or involved in your goals/objectives and therefore who is key to achieving the desired successful outcomes. Understands the motivations and priorities of these stakeholders and takes these into account in order to build and manage sustainable relationships. Can anticipate potential challenges stakeholders may bring and puts plans in place to achieve collaboration.

Creative

Takes ownership of the area where they are working. Looks for opportunities to promote services and Campaigns products to increase sales and create commercial value. Is able to think creatively and can make good profit related decisions as a result.

Ability to deliver creative and effective communications solutions that engage target audiences (and get cut through) to deliver positive business outcomes.

Agile Thinking

Appreciates and embraces change, addressing ambiguous or uncertain situations directly; easily adapts to changing circumstances/demands and helps others to accept the unknown.

Communications

Excellent written and verbal communication skills

Qualifications & Experience (where applicable)

Essential

- Extensive communications experience is essential.
- You will already have a strong track record in dealing with issues and crises within a high profile organisation, across both media and social media.
- Creative problem solving.
- Digital and social media communications experience.
- Proven experience of stakeholder management and influencing senior employees.
- Strong communications skills and coaching experience.

Desirable

- Highly proficient in the use of the Google Workspace suite of applications.
- Risk mitigation and crisis management
- Event management

Version	Created/updated by	Date
1.0	Ben Bailey	01.05.25

The table below shows specific accountabilities for each role tower:

John Lewis



- Overseeing all PR activity across the John Lewis brand and categories for Home; Fashion, Beauty or Tech
- Collaborate across the business to ensure that we are telling a department store story and putting out the key Customer Plan messages as part of that.
- Maintains an informed opinion and up to date knowledge of the external industry that impacts upon us particularly in Lifestyle media - print and digital - as well as Fashion & Beauty and Home.
- Influence how our key categories are perceived and what they say about our wider JL business, identifying key knowledge of activity and driving success in these
- Instill a culture of customer centric thinking across the team and cross functionally
- Manage, create and support the successful delivery of market-leading PR events for the media, influencers and external stakeholders from the planning stages to delivery on the day and evaluation. In addition and when required, support customer events by proposing and managing talent, topics and ideas to help turn customers into fans, achieve PR cut through and further enhance the brand

Waitrose

- Delivering PR activity across the Waitrose brand and categories within the Supermarket side of the business including Fresh food; ambient; BWS and Health as well as Customer Experience and services.
- Collaborate across the business to ensure that we are telling a story of quality, value and ethics across our Waitrose supermarket business
- Maintain an informed opinion and up to date knowledge of food, BWS and health and the external industry that impacts upon us particularly in lifestyle media - broadcast, print and digital.
- Influence how food and health is perceived, what they say about our wider Waitrose business, identifying key knowledge of activity and driving success in these
- Instill a culture of customer centric thinking across the team and cross functionally
- Help to develop the external narrative of the key categories and Brand story for Waitrose.
- Liaising with media through a mix of channels, from traditional to social and consumer/lifestyle.
- Feeding back key industry trends and topics from the media.
- Coordinate communications across PR, Social, Internal and Marketing Communications.
- Manage, create and support the successful delivery of market-leading PR events for the media, influencers and external stakeholders from the planning stages to delivery on the day and evaluation. In addition and when required, support customer events by proposing and managing talent, topics and ideas to help turn customers into fans, achieve PR cut through and further enhance the brand

Corporate

- Work closely with the Senior Communications Manager to collaborate across the business on the development of materials for Full Year, Interim trading results, and other key milestones
- Collaborate across the business to manage the design and content creation for the Annual Report and Accounts and create news opportunities that tell the story of the Partnership Plan
- Develop and maintain a strong knowledge of our industry and the journalists that are key to ensuring we land excellent coverage.
- Maintain an informed opinion and up to date knowledge of the retail industry as well as those industries that are new for the Partnership
- Influence how our Partnership is perceived, identifying key knowledge of activity and driving success in these
- Instil a culture of customer centric, creative thinking across the whole team and cross functionally so that the Partnership story is told beyond the corporate media landscape
- Communications experience is essential, including media relations, financial PR, corporate PR and complex stakeholder management.
- Liaising with media through a mix of channels, from traditional to social and consumer.
- Feeding back key industry trends and topics from the media.
- Help to coordinate communications across PR, Social, Internal and Marketing Communications.
- Manage, create and support the successful delivery of market-leading PR events for the media, influencers and



external stakeholders from the planning stages to delivery on the day and evaluation. In addition and when required, support customer events by proposing and managing talent, topics and ideas to help turn customers into fans, achieve PR cut through and further enhance the brand

Media Relations

- Deliver a market-leading media enquiries service by ensuring that a consistent approach is in place across the key business areas.
- Help to deliver a communication strategy that ensures we can protect the reputation of the John Lewis Partnership and its Lines of Business. This should involve working with others within the business and the wider Communications team, identifying potential risks as well as opportunities to actively promote and drive awareness of the Partnerships model, its purpose, innovations and corporate responsibility to key external audiences.
- Assist the Senior Communications manager in providing consultancy advice and horizon scanning potential corporate reputational issues. Act as a 'sounding board' for relevant teams on brand enhancing or brand damaging activity.
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- Help to maintain a comprehensive crisis communication plan for the Partnership and, where necessary, lead on its execution in a crisis
- Support the management senior executives' media profile, including training where required, and be able to suggest when and how we utilise senior spokespeople in a crisis situation.
- Escalate media queries that are likely to impact corporate reputation, and advise the business on appropriate actions, where necessary.