

Strategic Communications Specialist

Job Title: Strategic Communications Specialist
Location: Lafayette, LA
Department: Office of the Mayor-President, Communications and Media
Salary Range: \$75,000 annual (DOE)
Position Type: Full Time
Posted Until Filled

Department Overview

Lafayette Consolidated Government's Communications and Media Department works to provide transparent, timely, and accessible information about City-Parish Government to the citizens of Lafayette Parish while effectively communicating the priorities of the administration and of the work of LCG departments. The department develops and coordinates communications across a variety of platforms, including media relations, press briefings, interviews, public service announcements, social media, digital content, public engagement, executive communications, and press releases. The department works to ensure LCG communicates consistently, clearly, and proactively about the services, investments, initiatives, and decisions that impact the community.

Position Summary

The Strategic Communications Specialist is responsible for developing, coordinating, and executing strategic communications that advance the priorities, initiatives, and public-service mission of Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG).

Working closely with the Office of Mayor-President, Communications & Media staff, department directors, and other senior leadership, this position translates complex government policies, projects, programs, investments, and decisions into clear, accurate, timely, and accessible communications for residents, businesses, employees, community partners, elected officials, and the media.

The position serves as a strategic communications advisor and hands-on communications professional, providing guidance to leadership; developing messaging for major initiatives and emerging issues; independently managing communications for assigned projects and departments; supporting executive communications; identifying opportunities for proactive storytelling and earned media; and helping ensure LCG communicates with a consistent, professional, transparent, and recognizable voice.

This position requires both high-level strategic thinking and strong execution. The successful candidate must be able to anticipate communications needs, recommend an appropriate approach, gather information from subject-matter experts, develop high-quality communications materials, coordinate execution across channels, and move projects forward with limited day-to-day direction.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Communications

- Develop and implement comprehensive communications strategies supporting the Mayor-President's priorities and LCG initiatives.
- Serve as communications partner for assigned LCG departments, initiatives, and projects, independently managing communications needs and working directly with department leadership and subject-matter experts

- Create communications plans for major projects, policy initiatives, infrastructure investments, organizational changes, public meetings, community programs, and other significant government activities.
- Identify communications opportunities, potential challenges, stakeholder concerns, and emerging issues and recommend appropriate communications strategies.
- Develop key messages, talking points, FAQs, briefing materials, communications timelines, stakeholder messaging, and supporting materials.
- Ensure communications are coordinated across departments and aligned with LCG's broader priorities and objectives.
- Help establish measurable communications goals and evaluate the effectiveness of major communications initiatives.
- Maintain strong working relationships across LCG to identify communications needs early and reduce conflicting, duplicative, or reactive public messaging.

Executive Communications

- Prepare speeches, remarks, talking points, briefing documents, presentations, statements, letters, opinion pieces, messages, and other communications for the Mayor-President and senior leadership.
- Prepare leadership for media interviews, public meetings, community events, presentations, major announcements, and sensitive or rapidly developing issues.
- Translate technical, operational, financial, and policy information into clear language appropriate for public audiences.
- Anticipate questions, concerns, and potential areas of misunderstanding and prepare leadership with appropriate messaging and supporting information.
- Maintain consistency in executive messaging across speeches, media communications, public meetings, digital platforms, and written correspondence.
- Exercise sound judgment in determining the appropriate tone, level of detail, timing, and communications approach for executive and administration messaging.

Major Projects and Initiatives

- Serve as the strategic communications advisor for major LCG initiatives and projects.
- Take ownership of assigned initiatives from communications planning through execution, coordinating directly with departments and subject-matter experts to gather information, establish timelines, develop materials, and ensure communications are delivered on schedule.
- Work with project managers, department directors, engineers, planners, public safety officials, and other subject-matter experts to develop accurate and understandable public information.
- Develop communications strategies for infrastructure projects, transportation improvements, drainage initiatives, economic development, public safety, community development, parks, planning, emergency preparedness, and other government priorities.
- Coordinate project announcements, public engagement communications, construction updates, milestone communications, ribbon cuttings, and project completion messaging.
- Maintain awareness of major LCG projects and upcoming milestones requiring public communication.
- Translate government activity into public impact by connecting projects, investments, programs, and services to the people, neighborhoods, businesses, and communities they affect.
- Help establish clear and recognizable narratives around major administration priorities so individual announcements and project updates reinforce LCG's broader direction and objectives.

Media and Public Information

- Coordinate with Communications & Media staff on press releases, media advisories, public statements, news conferences, interviews, and media inquiries.
- Assist in developing responses to complex, sensitive, or high-profile media issues.
- Ensure public information is factual, timely, understandable, and consistent across communication channels.
- Monitor media coverage and community discussion involving major LCG initiatives and identify issues requiring communications attention.

Crisis and Emergency Communications

- Support LCG's crisis and emergency communications efforts in coordination with the Lafayette Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and appropriate departments.
- Develop and coordinate communications related to severe weather, emergencies, infrastructure disruptions, public safety incidents, continuity of government, and other critical events.
- Assist with Joint Information System/Joint Information Center operations when activated.
- Help ensure emergency information is accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible across communication platforms.
- Develop communications plans and templates before emergencies occur to improve LCG's ability to communicate rapidly during critical incidents.
- Be available to support emergency and crisis communications outside normal business hours when necessary.

Community and Stakeholder Communications

- Develop communications strategies for public meetings, stakeholder meetings, neighborhood engagement, business outreach, and community initiatives.
- Identify audiences affected by major government decisions or projects and develop appropriate communications approaches for each audience.
- Coordinate messaging with community organizations, public agencies, municipalities, business organizations, educational institutions, nonprofit partners, and other stakeholders when appropriate.
- Support public engagement efforts by developing materials that clearly explain proposals, timelines, impacts, opportunities for participation, and next steps.

Digital and Content Strategy

- Work with Communications & Media staff to develop coordinated content across LCG websites, social media platforms, video, email, newsletters, graphics, and other digital channels.
- Identify opportunities to use storytelling, video, graphics, data visualization, and other communication tools to explain government programs and demonstrate public impact.
- Develop content calendars and communications schedules for major initiatives.
- Help ensure digital communications maintain consistent messaging, branding, tone, and accessibility.

Internal Communications

- Support internal communications involving major organizational initiatives, policies, emergency operations, and leadership priorities.
- Develop communications that help employees understand significant organizational changes and government initiatives.

- Coordinate with department leadership to ensure employees receive timely and accurate information when they are directly affected by government decisions or operational changes.
- Promote communication across departments to reduce conflicting or duplicative public messaging.

Strategic Communications Planning

The Strategic Communications Specialist should maintain a forward-looking communications process that identifies upcoming government decisions, project milestones, public meetings, major events, announcements, storytelling opportunities, and potential communications risks.

The position will regularly coordinate with executive leadership and department directors to determine:

- What information the public needs to know;
- Why the information matters to the community;
- When information should be communicated;
- Which audiences should receive the information;
- Which communication channels are most appropriate;
- Who should serve as the spokesperson;
- What questions or concerns are likely to arise;
- What communications opportunities exist beyond the immediate announcement or request; and
- How LCG will evaluate whether its communication was effective.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The successful candidate should demonstrate:

- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong strategic judgment and the ability to advise executive leadership.
- Ability to operate independently, take ownership of assigned communications portfolios, and move work forward without extensive day-to-day direction.
- Ability to translate complex government, policy, financial, infrastructure, and technical information into understandable public communications.
- Knowledge of government communications, media relations, public affairs, community engagement, and crisis communications.
- Strong organizational and project-management abilities.
- Ability to manage multiple projects, deadlines, and competing priorities simultaneously.
- Ability to work effectively with elected officials, executive leadership, department directors, technical professionals, media representatives, community organizations, and members of the public.
- Sound judgment when handling confidential, sensitive, controversial, or rapidly developing matters.
- Understanding of digital communications, social media strategy, website content, video, and emerging communications platforms.
- Ability to anticipate public questions and communications challenges before they become significant issues.
- Ability to determine when a communications request requires a press release, media strategy, digital content, direct stakeholder outreach, public engagement or other communications approach rather than defaulting to a single channel or deliverable.
- Ability to work effectively during emergencies, after normal business hours, and under compressed deadlines when necessary.

Minimum Qualifications**Education:**

Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in communications, public relations, journalism, public administration, political science, marketing, English, business, or a closely related field.

Experience:

Three years or more of progressively responsible professional experience in strategic communications, public affairs, government communications, journalism, media relations, public relations, executive communications, community engagement, or a related field.

Substitutions:

Experience in marketing, public relations, library science, and/or the research, written preparation and dissemination of information to the public or on behalf of an organization to its customers through such medium as publications, broadcasting, Internet web pages, social media, or public speaking will substitute for the required degree on the basis of one year of experience for thirty semester hours of college.

Note:

Any college hours or degree must be from an accredited college or university.

Preferred Qualifications

Preference may be given to candidates with:

- Experience working in municipal, parish, state, or federal government.
- Experience supporting executive-level leadership or elected officials.
- Experience independently managing communications for major public projects or initiatives.
- Experience developing communications strategies for major infrastructure or capital projects.
- Experience in crisis, emergency, or public safety communications.
- Experience communicating complex infrastructure, planning, budget, economic development, or policy issues.
- Demonstrated experience working with news media and preparing executive leadership for interviews.
- Experience coordinating communications involving multiple agencies or departments.
- Demonstrated ability to identify compelling stories and translate organizational accomplishments into communications that demonstrate public impact.
- Knowledge of Lafayette Parish, Acadiana, and local governmental operations.

How to Apply:

Qualified candidates are invited to submit their resume, cover letter, and professional references to applicant@LafayetteLA.gov include "Strategic Communications Specialist" in the job interest subject line.