Josh Gorbutt

Strategic & Crisis Communications Executive

Executive Communications · Crisis & Issues Response · Public Affairs · Editorial Standards

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SUMMARY

Emmy and Murrow Award-winning communications leader with two decades of communications leadership, holding internal, external, executive and crisis communications in a single seat. As News Director at KBTX, I lead a team of more than 50 people who publish across every channel the organization owns, I advise and prepare the leaders who speak for it, and I run the response when something goes wrong in public and the clock is already running. I also carry the public affairs side: legislative engagement for the Texas Association of Broadcasters and the Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce in Austin and Washington, and standing relationships with officials across the Texas Triangle. Selected for the 2024 RIAS Berlin Commission Fellowship, one of fewer than 20 U.S. journalists chosen annually, with time inside EU institutions in Brussels and at NATO headquarters.

EXPERIENCE

KBTX · Gray Television · News Director — Jul 2015 to Present

- Own the internal narrative for a 50-plus person organization, run the twice-daily meeting cadence that keeps it aligned through constant change, and serve as its primary internal and external communications voice, holding the editorial line on clarity and accuracy.
- Lead real-time crisis and change communications across breaking news, institutional failures and live disruptions, building rapid-response protocols coordinated across legal, operations and senior leadership.
- Coach executives and on-air talent for high-stakes public appearances, live interviews and crisis moments, translating authentic voice under pressure into credible delivery.
- Led the full-scale change to virtual and hybrid operations, redesigning workflows and infrastructure and expanding to 50-plus broadcast hours weekly without missing a single newscast or event.
- Lead Gray Television company-wide in adoption and implementation of AI tools, and led AI small-group and seminar trainings for the company, expanding what the team can do without replacing personnel.
- Manage a multimillion-dollar annual budget, structured and executed large-scale talent and vendor contracts, and report ROI to leadership across editorial, production and operations.
- Grew total platform reach more than 50% and more than doubled engagement reach through audience-first storytelling and disciplined editorial standards.
- Won the national Edward R. Murrow Award for a month-long accountability investigation built on extensive public records work, published as a digital deep-dive podcast with a companion site; the reporting contributed to changes in state agency funding in the Texas Legislature.

KBTX · Gray Television · News Operations Manager — 2013 to 2015

- Led a comprehensive rebrand covering messaging, visual identity and brand voice, and managed vendor and technology-partner relationships across multi-site automation rollouts as corporate trainer and primary operational lead.

KBTX · Gray Television · Marketing & Promotions Director — 2012 to 2013

- Planned and executed community events, brand activations and sponsorship programs from concept through post-event reconciliation, driving measurable engagement and revenue growth.

CW8 Aggieland · Gray Television · Director of Operations — 2011 to 2013

- Spearheaded a complete station relaunch as an integrated brand and communications transformation, delivering more than 200% viewership growth, record revenue and CW Model Affiliate recognition.

Gray Television · Marketing & Creative Services Producer — 2008 to 2011

- Produced branded long-form content and live event coverage, including an Emmy-nominated documentary co-produced with Blue Bell Creameries, managing production logistics, external partners, talent and distribution.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS & GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

- Legislative engagement for the Texas Association of Broadcasters and the Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce in Austin and Washington; built relationships with lawmakers and officials and advocated for legislative positions.
- Work regularly with and address government bodies including commissioners courts, city councils and school boards; serve on the Bryan ISD Superintendent Advisory Committee.
- Teach crisis communications and media relations to first responders and public information officers in Brazos County, at Texas A&M and at the Port of Houston.

SKILLS

Communications: Executive communications and coaching, internal narrative and messaging, public affairs and legislative engagement, all-hands and town hall production, crisis and issues response, change management, editorial standards, employee engagement, social and digital strategy

Operations: Budget ownership, talent and vendor contract structuring, agency and partner management, cross-functional leadership, ROI reporting

Tools and Platforms: Slack, Trello, Airtable, Adobe Creative Suite, Canva, AI content tools, SocialNewsDesk, Hootsuite

CRM & Analytics: HubSpot, Salesforce, Google Analytics, Chartbeat, Power BI

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Integrated Marketing Communications
Sam Houston State University

HONORS & AWARDS

- Edward R. Murrow National Award, Digital Coverage, RTDNA, 2023
- Edward R. Murrow Regional Awards, 15 wins including Overall Excellence, Innovation and Breaking News, RTDNA, 2019 to 2025
- Texas Broadcast News Award and Charles E. Green Award, Breaking News, Texas Association of Broadcasters and Headliners Foundation of Texas, 2026
- Jason Hightower Award for Broadcast Excellence, Inaugural Winner, Texas Association of Broadcasters, 2021
- Lone Star Emmy Awards, Investigative, Continuing Coverage, Breaking News, News Series and Newscast
- Gracie Awards, Alliance for Women in Media Foundation, 2022 and 2023
- Bonner McLane Public Service Award, four-time winner, Texas Association of Broadcasters, 2019 to 2023
- Nancy Monson Spirit of Freedom of Information Award, Texas Freedom of Information Foundation, 2023

SELECT FELLOWSHIPS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RIAS Berlin Commission Fellowship · Germany & Brussels Spring/Summer 2024
One of fewer than 20 U.S. journalists selected each year and fewer than 1,000 since the program began. Two weeks of intensive meetings with policymakers and newsrooms across Germany and Belgium, including a full day inside EU institutions in Brussels and a full day at NATO headquarters.

Carole Kneeland Project for Responsible Journalism Spring 2020
Selective fellowship in ethics, executive decision-making and leadership; fewer than 800 news leaders nationwide have completed it.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Community Foundation of the Brazos Valley · Past Chair & Trustee; chairs strategic planning 2019 to Present
Bryan Independent School District · Superintendent Advisory Committee 2023 to Present
Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce · Leadership Brazos Chair & Alumni Board 2018 to 2023
Baylor Scott & White College Station · Volunteer Ambassador Board Member 2021 to 2024
American Cancer Society · Cattle Baron's Ball Chairperson 2014 to 2016