

Job description

Job title: Communications Manager

Hours: Full time, permanent

Salary: £35k

Responsible to: Communications Director

Introduction – about HCT Group

HCT Group is a social enterprise in the transport industry, safely providing over 30 million passenger trips on our buses every year. We deliver a range of transport services across the UK – from London red buses to social services transport, from school transport to whole bus networks, from community transport to education and training. We reinvest the profits from our commercial work into further transport services or projects in the communities we serve. More information can be found at www.hctgroup.org.

About the role

The key task of HCT Group's Communications function is to position the organisation as an indispensable partner to all our stakeholders, supporting increased social impact and business growth. These stakeholders include the commissioners of transport services, local and national policy-makers, our customers, service users and communities – and the broader worlds of community transport and social enterprise.

The Communications Manager's role will be focused on this task, leading HCT Group's approach in media/press relations and our social media strategy. Alongside the Communications Director, the post also involves providing communications support for our public policy work and providing the full range of communications and marketing support to our operations across the country.

Main responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the role include

Media relations

Lead on the organisation's relationship with the press and the media, broadening the organisation's ability to tell its story to a wide range of publics:

- Act as the organisation's first point of contact with the media
- Work with internal stakeholders and media outlets to generate positive news stories
- Build positive relationships with the journalists who are or should be writing about HCT Group
- Advise colleagues at all levels across the Group on media relations



- Lead on defensive media relations/crisis comms, working with the executive and regional directors in the event of serious issues or incidents
- Work with operations teams at a local level to maximise local media profile
- Where appropriate, act as a spokesperson for the Group
- Identify and engage other key influencers across the broadest possible definition of 'media' amongst our audiences

Social media

Starting with a reasonably open brief, develop and execute an appropriate social media strategy for the Group:

- Identify the most appropriate objectives, social media channels, approach, tone of voice and content strategy to meet the Group's needs
- Build a shared understanding of what success would look like for the Group on social media and then measure against it
- Take ownership and drive content for the chosen channels at a corporate level
- Provide a programme of support for colleagues across the operation in making the most out of social media locally

Corporate communications

Working alongside the Communications Director, generate and distribute high quality content in support of the organisation's positioning strategy:

- Where appropriate, write blogs, opinion pieces and other content as briefed by and under the by-line of the Chief Executive
- Contribute to the generation of ideas for appropriate content, either as standalone pieces or as part of structured campaigns on key issues
- Contribute to the development of white papers or other IP and develop campaigns for their dissemination
- Contribute to the maintenance of, and, where appropriate, development of content on the Group's website

In-house agency

Working alongside the Communications Director, provide a range of in house marketing and communications support to our operations teams across the country:

- In addition to providing press and social media support, in dialogue with operations teams, develop integrated communications plans to support their work
- Prepare and produce a wide variety of collateral in line with the communications plans, including copywriting, managing or executing design, and print management
- Support operations teams in the execution of their campaigns

Public policy

Working alongside the Communications Director, Chief Executive and Head of Chief Executive's Office, provide communications support for HCT Group's public policy work:

- Develop communications approaches to widen the impact of HCT Group's public policy work.

- Develop and disseminate content in support of our campaigns.

Internal Communications

Working alongside the Communications Director and the Head of People and Talent, provide support for a rolling programme of staff engagement across the Group's operations:

- Create content for the staff intranet as appropriate
- Develop and roll out campaigns to engage staff with the mission and values of the organisation

Person specification

Essential skills and experience

Significant experience in successfully using proactive public/media relations to raise the profile of organisations amongst their stakeholders through increased coverage in traditional media

A proven track record of building positive relationships with journalists and other commentators

Significant experience of developing and implementing social media strategies and other digital approaches

Experience of developing and executing communications strategies and plans, including multi-channel campaigns

The traditional range of communications 'craft skills' – publication grade copywriting, promotional prose, press release writing, design management to a style guide, public speaking, print management and a willingness to use these skills day-to-day

Experience of engaging non-communications professionals in the communications process

Outstanding written and verbal communications skills

A commitment to equality of opportunity and to the values and social mission of HCT Group

Experience of successfully handling negative issues in the media

Experience of working with websites and web content

An understanding of the role of communications in influencing public policy

As a minimum, educated to degree standard/of degree calibre

Desirable skills

Experience of developing and executing promotional campaigns using the full marketing mix

Experience of formal stakeholder consultation exercises

Professional qualifications in Public Relations (CIPR or equivalent)

Cross training/qualifications in marketing (CIM or equivalent)

Experience of communications for public policy

Experience of crisis communications

A working knowledge of graphic design software