

# James R. Zook, Jr. (Jim)

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## PROFILE

Seasoned higher ed executive who has led central marketing and communications teams at two flagship universities. Strengthen and rebuild teams by operating with a university-first mindset and focusing on the potential for storytelling to fuel growth and transformation.

- Marcomm Strategy
- Content Marketing
- Campaign Management
- Reputation Management
- Leadership Communications
- Brand Management
- Media Relations
- Internal Communications
- Trusted Advisor

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX**

Vice President and Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, 2024-2026

- Led the central marketing & communications function of 40 professionals serving a flagship public university with 55,000 students and one of the world's premier higher education brands
- Rebuilt a downsized central marcomm function, including defining a new strategic roadmap, investing in critical infrastructure, and recruiting new leaders for brand and creative strategy, multimedia production, social media, and internal communications
- Drove the creation and adoption of a new brand positioning strategy and brand narrative to equip the university's 300 marcomm professionals to tell a consistent UT story
- Planned and managed leadership communications during a presidential transition from interim appointment through investiture
- Built an issues management function and crisis communications plan to deliver an integrated campus-wide approach, including weekly Issues Meetings with senior leaders and focus on crisis preparedness
- Spearheaded a multi-channel content marketing campaign to support restoration of the iconic UT Tower

### **University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS**

Vice Chancellor for Marketing & Communications, 2018-2024

- Led the university's central marketing & communications function, including management of a 35-person team serving a flagship public university of nearly 25,000 students
- Spearheaded an award-winning overhaul of undergraduate admissions marketing, helping to reverse a multi-year enrollment decline and contributing to enrollment growth of more than 30% from 2020-2024
- Championed the complete rebuild of a 60k-page university website, including adoption of a new content management system and implementation of a web governance plan to improve accessibility and SEO
- Directed major new investments in marketing and brand management, including development of a comprehensive brand identity and first digital marketing campaigns for admissions
- Led reputational risk management efforts, including initiation of an issues management approach to assess emerging issues, and response on issues attracting national and regional media coverage
- Oversaw COVID communications activities and served on the university's Core Response Team

### **Deloitte, Atlanta, GA**

Head of Communications, Deloitte & Touche and Project Iris Change Lead – 2016-2018

- Led a staff of nine communicators plus multiple agencies and contractors delivering internal, external and CEO communications services for a Big Four US audit firm
- Drove more proactive media coverage by leveraging thought leadership, broadening media training and pitching more story ideas – yielding a 240% YoY increase in favorable media coverage
- Oversaw strategy and execution of a broad-based campaign to amplify a new business strategy, infusing a new lexicon into all internal communications channels on an ongoing basis
- Served as change and communications lead on a \$20 million technology project to enhance internal communications across all Deloitte US businesses

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (continued)**

### **US Crisis Communications Lead – 2014-2016**

- Led development of a new crisis communications program, including development and delivery of tabletop exercises and development of prepared messaging for foreseeable incidents
- Managed crisis communications responses on cybersecurity, civil litigation, talent issues and more
- Drove development and implementation of a brand narrative website for the Deloitte US Firms

### **US CEO Communications Lead – 2013-2014**

- Served as interim lead for a team of six communicators that managed and produced external and internal CEO Communications activities, including speeches, media interviews, town halls, and more
- Managed successful production of Leadership Live, Deloitte's first live-streamed town hall for 70k US professionals, on an extremely aggressive timetable

### **Communications Lead, Deloitte US Markets & Offerings – 2012-13**

- Designed and led a Program Management Office to conduct a strategic review and reorg of the communications function across Deloitte US
- Managed five communicators for M&A Services, Federal Services, Integrated Market Offerings, Regions

### **Communications Lead, Deloitte Federal Government Services – 2009-2012**

- Led creation of a communications function in wake of merger that created a new 7,000-person business
- Advised Federal leaders on how best to communicate a range of organizational change initiatives

### **Mercer Inc., Atlanta, GA**

#### **Principal, Workforce Communication and Change consulting practice – 2006-2009**

- Led and supported business development efforts generating more than \$800k in revenue, including RFP responses and finalist pitches
- Managed project delivery and project team members involving large-scale organizational change and workforce communication issues, including mergers and acquisitions, Total Rewards strategies, and development of intranet portals

### **Jim Zook Communications, Atlanta, GA**

#### **Principal – 2004-2006**

- Created key elements of an award-winning communications program to support the merger of two national wireless providers
- Developed thought leadership products for Organization & Change Strategy practice for Accenture
- Advised communication team for a global manufacturer on internal communications, including development of a strategic internal communications plan

### **BellSouth Corporation, Atlanta, GA**

Management Leadership Program (a rotational program for newly minted MBA graduates)

### **Office of the US Secretary of Education, Washington, DC**

Speechwriter & Communications Aide

### **The Chronicle of Higher Education, Washington, DC**

Assistant Editor/Government and Politics

## **EDUCATION**

MBA, The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business

MA in American Studies, University of Sussex (attended on Rotary Scholarship for International Study)

BA in Journalism & Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## **PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION and COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

Member, Arthur W. Page Society for chief communications officers

Executive Committee, Council on Strategic Communications, Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities

Led Ole Miss team that won two CASE national Circle of Excellence awards and eight CASE district awards

Outstanding Performance Awards, Deloitte Services LP – 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2018

Second Vice Chair and Director, UNC General Alumni Association