KAYLA SIEFKER

248-761-0304 | ksiefker6531@gmail.com | LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/kayla-siefker-198553/ | Farmington Hills, MI 48331

PR & COMMUNICATIONS LEADER

Strategic communications leader developing and executing PR and media relations strategies that shape market **narratives**, drive **thought leadership** and **increase brand visibility** across EdTech, **B2B enterprise tech and SaaS markets**. **Strategic storyteller** with **a journalistic instinct** for identifying what's truly newsworthy, who's **not afraid to take risks** and push boundaries to **bring hidden stories to life**. Love experimenting with new technologies and **using AI tools to enhance work efficiency**, productivity, creativity and PR workflows. Specialized in **translating complex messages into compelling narratives**, building strong relationships with media, market-moving **earned media content strategies**, fostering **cross-functional stakeholder collaboration** and **crisis communications**. Strategic, **hands-on leader** leveraging expert PR to **drive global growth**, **accelerate market influence** and **enhance brand equity**.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- ✓ *Media Relations Strategy & Execution*
- ✓ *Thought Leadership Programs*
- ✓ *AI-Assisted PR Workflows*
- ✓ *Storytelling & Brand Narrative Development*
- ✓ *Messaging Framework Development*
- ✓ *Cross-Functional Team Collaboration*
- ✓ *PR Agency Management & Budgeting*
- ✓ *Earned Media Strategy*
- ✓ *AI-Driven Content Strategies*
- ✓ *Performance Metrics & Analytics*
- ✓ *Crisis & Reputation Management*
- ✓ *Communications Process Support*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Gale, *part of Cengage Group* – Farmington Hills, MI

Director, Media & Public Relations   Aug 2021 – May 2025

- **Built and led comprehensive global PR function** for brand across K-12, higher ed and public library markets.
- **Architected brand positioning that increased thought leadership footprint** by 64% through 10+ executive and customer-driven programs using integrated earned, paid, owned and shared media content strategies—expanding press coverage, **boosting web traffic** and generating **qualified sales leads** via AI-powered PR content.
- **Launched executive thought leadership program** that addressed buyer objections via contributed articles in top-tier higher ed publications—**empowering sales and marketing teams** with **third-party credibility** and **relationship-building tools**.
- **Amplified brand visibility** of Gale's Thorndike Press youth large print business by 96%, **securing prominent media coverage** in outlets like *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Publishers Weekly*, *EdSurge*, *Tech & Learning* and *District Administration*, **producing AI-powered PR content** that **drove new sales** and established the Thorndike brand as the **trusted authority and go-to source** for youth large print.
- Generated 228% **spike in adult student enrollment** and $300K+ revenue in 30 days through **targeted PR campaign** spotlighting adult high school diploma program, supported by local workforce development print and TV coverage.
- Shaped company narrative around AI innovation in K-12, building **PR momentum** to **launch of AI Leveling tool** through **thought leadership program** that secured coverage in top-tier pubs and podcasts like: *EdTech Digest*, District Administration, *The Learning Counsel*, *eSchool News*, *MiddleWeb*, and *TLL K-12 and Teaching to Transform* podcasts.
- **Led crisis communications strategy**, partnering with legal, product, public affairs, and **executive leadership** to **develop unified response protocols**, mitigating risk and **protecting brand reputation**.
- Managed $300K+ **annual PR budget** and **agency relationship**, **overseeing strategic planning**, **contract negotiation**, execution of **multi-channel PR campaigns**, and **analysis of communications metrics** to **ensure ROI**.

Executive Manager, Media & Public Relations   May 2020 – July 2021

- **Amplified brand visibility** by 250%+ by implementing and managing comprehensive **product awards and reviews programs** across multiple business units, positioning Gale as leader in EdTech innovation.
- Secured 50+ local **broadcast news stories** through strategic partnerships, **leveraging human-interest narratives** to **drive brand trust**, **community impact**, and **business opportunities**.
- **Drove thought leadership** across **education markets**—crafting and distributing over 500 topical, **event-driven stories** that elevated Gale's relevance in K-12, higher education, and public library sectors, and reinforced its **commitment to equity and lifelong learning**.
- **Enhanced global brand equity** by ~ 50% through **PR campaigns** that secured hundreds of **international media placements** across 10+ countries, positioning brand as trusted partner in **academic research**.
- **Provided competitive PR benchmarking** and **data-driven insights** to **executive leadership**, ensuring alignment of **external communications strategy** with **market dynamics**, **emerging trends**, and **KPIs**.
- Collaborated with **cross-functional and international teams** including Sales, Marketing, Product, Creative, and external PR agencies to **deliver high-impact campaigns**, **crisis communications**, **media briefings**, and **executive messaging**.

Senior Media & Public Relations Manager   Sept 2017 – May 2020

- **Elevated brand visibility** and **revenue impact** by implementing **integrated global PR strategies**, **growing media reach** by 43%, generating 130 qualified sales leads for K-12 product launch and supporting $856K+ in **revenue** through a high-visibility campaigns.

- **Secured international media coverage** across 10+ countries for digital archive launch in partnership with The British Library, reaching 100M+ readers through top outlets like *The Guardian* and driving 10K+ **referral visits**.
- Led **high-impact cross-functional campaigns** with Marketing, Product, Sales, and Creative teams to **align PR** with **business goals**, developing **strategic messaging**, **press kits**, **earned/owned/paid media content**, **conference media plans** and **media training** for **executive visibility** at **major industry events**.

Dynatrace – Detroit, MI & Boston, MA

Global Public Relations, Senior Manager, Solution Marketing   *June 2015 – Sept 2016*
- **Increased worldwide share of voice** by **30**%+ **YOY** by driving new **PR initiatives**.
- **Managed U.S. PR agency** and **collaborated with international PR agencies in EMEA, APAC and LATAM** to rollout PR and media relations strategies and campaigns in local markets.
- **Amplified global news impact** by **50**%+ since 2014 rebrand by creating and releasing targeted, focused stories to **expand reach and enhance PR** in partnership with **global** teams.
- Developed and implemented **global customer commentary benchmark guidelines** regarding outages and industry events to maintained positive, factual communications across **benchmark PR campaigns**.
- Placed thousands of feature articles in **top-tier U.S. business** and **tech** publications, including *Forbes*, **Wall Street Journal**, *Fox Business*, *TechCrunch*, *CNBC*, *Network World*, *InfoWorld*, *eWeek*, *InformationWeek* and *CIO Magazine.*
- Managed **annual PR budget** of $375K and all **daily operations** of the U.S. PR agency, ensuring alignment, quality and measurable impact.

Senior Analyst Relations & Public Relations Manager   *April 2013 – June 2015*
- **Improved company mindshare** with the **analyst community** through **50**+ analyst interactions and inclusion in **15**+ analyst reports, including **Gartner APM Magic Quadrant**.
- Led all **media relations** and **analyst relations**, resulting in **global press coverage** of **830** articles including coverage in *WSJ* and *Forbes*, **31** **analyst** inquiries, and **five analyst** write-ups.
- Managed **AR** and **PR** budget of $**700K+**, including negotiating all **analyst** and **PR** contracts.
- **Boosted executive visibility** by securing in-person interviews to publicize company culture through venues including *Boston Globe*, *Network World*, and *CRN*.

Compuware *(acquired by BMC Software in 2020)* **–** Detroit, MI

Senior Analyst Relations & Public Relations Manager, APM Business Unit   *Apr 2011 – Apr 2013*
- Led and executed **analyst relations** and **public relations** strategies on acquisition of DynaTrace, resulting in global press coverage of **170** articles, **900**+ social media hits, **21** analyst inquiries, and **six** analyst write-ups.
- Tripled company **news share of voice**, surpassing nearest competitors by **51.78**%.
- **Increased press coverage** with customers and prospects, releasing **600**+ articles and **three** TV interviews to establish company as "go-to" expert on Healthcare.gov.

Communications Manager, Vantage & Cloud Computing Solutions   *July 2009 – Apr 2011*
- Achieved company recognition as leader in Gartner 2011 APM Magic Quadrant, with **349** analyst interactions.
- Oversaw launch of CloudSleuth site, **increasing web traffic and awareness** by **80**%, resulting in recognition as "go-to" expert source on **cloud performance monitoring** by **media** and **analysts**.
- **Overhauled PR** for the underperforming **product line**, improving press and analyst visibility by **100**%.
- Coordinated a roundtable of Healthcare **CIOs** that provided *InformationWeek Magazine* with exclusive coverage.

Additional Experience

Compuware – *Corporate Communications Manager, Changepoint Solution • Corporate Communications Analyst, Quality Solutions • Corporate Communications Analyst*, Professional Services | **WSJM/AM 1400** – *News Reporter/Anchor*

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts (BA), Journalism: Michigan State University – East Lansing, MI

TECHNICAL SKILLS & TOOLS

PR, Social Media & Digital Engagement: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, Snapchat, LinkedIn, BlueSky, Hootsuite, Sprout Social, Brandwatch, Buffer, UTM Tracking, Cision, Meltwater, Muck Rack, Google Analytics, TVEyes, PR Newswire, Business Wire, GlobeNewswire, PRWeb

AI-Powered Content & Communication: ChatGPT, Perplexity.ai, Claude.ai, Writesonic, CoPilot, Gemini

Digital Communication & Productivity: Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Workspace, Microsoft Office Suite, Slack, WhatsApp, AP Style, Grammarly, Webex

Content Creation & Management: Adobe Creative Cloud, Adobe Premiere Rush, Brandfolder, Widen, WordPress, Bloomreach, Vimeo/video production

Marketing & Project Management: Workfront, Tableau, SAP xSuite, Catalyst, Salesforce, Trello, JIRA

Core Capabilities: strategic thinking, storytelling, organizational leadership, written and verbal communication mastery, thrive in fast-paced environments