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SKILLS

Core Marketing Expertise

- Integrated Marketing
- Field Marketing
- Retail Marketing
- Multicultural Marketing
- Sponsorships & Partnerships
- Consumer Behavior
- Competitive Analysis

Business Acumen

- Strategic Planning
- Market Research
- Business Forecasting
- Data Analysis
- Budget Management
- Team Leadership

Omnichannel Management

- Broadcast Production
- Print Production
- In-Store Merchandising
- Package Design
- Digital + Social Media

Communication

- Content Development
- Media Relations
- Public Speaking
- Languages: English + Spanish

KAREN MARIA COLLAZO

MARKETER, STRATEGIST, STORYTELLER

I'm a dynamic marketer with experience driving results in retail and QSR marketing. Proven expertise in developing integrated marketing strategies that boost brand visibility, drive sales and guest counts, and engage diverse audiences. Skilled at building and nurturing strong collaborative relationships that drive successful partnerships and team cohesion. Adept at managing cross-functional teams, optimizing budgets, and leading the creation of insightful data-driven campaigns. Bilingual communicator with a passion for bold, innovative solutions that deliver measurable success.

QSR & RETAIL MARKETING EXPERIENCE

Account Director | Arnold, d' Exposito, and Leo Burnett | 2011 - 2015

Client: McDonald's (New York Region, Multicultural, McCafé, Happy Meals)

Started by leading the New York Metro Region business for McDonald's, focusing on local market strategy and execution. Quickly expanded to national campaigns, managing iconic programs like McCafé and Happy Meals, which drove significant brand growth and consumer engagement.

- **Responsibilities:** Monitoring business performance, presenting marketing recommendations, building key client relationships, managing budgets, and initiating innovative tactics to grow retail sales and guest counts.
- **Achieved a 10% lift in comp sales and a 6.5% increase in guest counts** by directing a 15-member team in executing regional marketing strategies.
- **Increased brand visibility and engagement by 20%** through sponsorship programs, including McCafé and Happy Meal activations.
- **Secured a \$500K budget increase** through innovative marketing approaches, reversing a 5-year trend of declining budgets.
- **Revitalized an under-performing team** by creating new project management protocols, improving cross-functional communication, and developing junior account staff.


Account Director | Leo Burnett and Alma Advertising | 2015 - 2017


Client: Sprint Wireless (Retail Merchandising, Multicultural Marketing)


Began on Sprint Wireless' retail merchandising team, managing in-store strategies to optimize product visibility and drive sales. Transitioned to the multicultural agency of record, where I led high-profile partnerships with A-list celebrities and sponsors like FIFA, while overseeing comprehensive advertising initiatives targeted at Hispanic consumers to strengthen brand resonance and market share.

- **Responsibilities:** Leading a multi-disciplinary team, overseeing creative development of broad-reach media strategies and targeted activations, and ensuring client goals and budgets are met.
- **Drove a 12% increase in customer acquisition** by leading a \$10M national Hispanic marketing campaign.
- **Increased in-store traffic by 8% and improved product visibility** by spearheading innovative retail merchandising initiatives.
- **Produced integrated multi-channel campaigns** across TV, radio, print, digital, and social media platforms, enhancing cross-channel brand messaging.
- **Redesigned internal project management processes** to support new business initiatives, streamlining workflows for in-store merchandising production and improving delivery timelines.



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MARKETER, STRATEGIST, STORYTELLER

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS EXPERIENCE

Associate Director | Cheryl Andrews Communications | 2017 - 2018

Clients: Costa Rica Tourism Board, Couples Resorts, Hawks Cay Resort

Began managing the Costa Rica Board of Tourism account, leading strategic public relations efforts to grow Costa Rica's position as a premier travel destination. Quickly expanded responsibilities to include additional high-profile clients such as Hawks Cay Resort and Couples Resorts, developing tailored content that drove media coverage, increased bookings, and strengthened brand visibility.

- **Responsibilities:** Managing public relations efforts, coordinating with international stakeholders, and executing high-profile media events.
- **Increased travel bookings by 23%** by designing and successfully executing culinary brand experiences across top U.S. and Canada markets.
- **Generated \$160M in earned media coverage** by organizing traditional press trips and media events, enhanced by social media influencer amplification.
- **Increased article distribution rates by 98%** through strategically-aligned messaging that leveraged new travel trends.
- **Established a new travel category** for the client, creating a strategic pillar for future campaigns.

Marketing Consultant and Content Writer | Freelance | 2018 - Present

Select Clients: Annette Collazo, Writing Class Radio Podcast, Avelina Oats, Write Pittsburgh, Chatham University, Sarah Shotland, Carlow University

What began as a sabbatical to focus on grad school evolved into a thriving freelance career, fueled by strong connections and a passion for impactful storytelling. I've collaborated with local universities, public figures, and nonprofit organizations, creating campaigns and content across diverse categories. The pandemic and 2020 election shaped my work, giving me opportunities to drive meaningful change while honing my expertise.

- **Responsibilities:** Conduct client consultations, develop tailored communication strategies, provide bilingual content support, perform market research, and craft compelling omnichannel marketing plans to drive brand awareness and community engagement.
- **Secured 44% of the vote, raised \$250,000, and garnered over 20 high-profile endorsements** from influential organizations such as Planned Parenthood and advocacy groups like SAVE, for Annette Collazo's campaign for U.S. Representative in Florida's District 110.
- **Increased podcast listenership by 133% and grew social followers from 175 to 1,621** by developing SEO-optimized blog posts for Writing Class Radio.
- **Increased sales by 20% and expanded the brand's market presence in Miami** by creating bilingual digital content for Avelina Oats' website.
- **Boosted community attendance and engagement by 35%** by leading and executing event marketing strategies for Write Pittsburgh.
- **Increased donor engagement and contributions** by crafting branded storytelling content for Chatham University's high-profile alumni campaign.
- **Grew online engagement by 40%** by designing and implementing a social media strategy for a debut author.

DIGITAL KNOWLEDGE

- Microsoft Office Applications
- Adobe Creative Suite
- Google Workspace
- Zoom/ Skype/ Teams
- Canva
- Basecamp
- Wix/ Word Press
- Constant Contact
- Mailchimp
- ChatGPT
- Cision/ PR Newswire
- Instagram, Facebook, etc.
- Hootsuite

EDUCATION

Chatham University
MFA in Creative Writing

Florida International University
B.S. in Marketing Communications

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Roles in account management for major brands such as Burger King, GNC, Naked Juice, and General Motors. Successfully led product launches, regional marketing initiatives, and diverse audience engagement strategies, contributing to significant sales and brand growth.