

SHONA MAC SWEENEY

MA Communications(Hons) PGDip(Law)
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS LEADER



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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Strategic communications leader with a passion for motivating teams towards achieving business goals. Responsible for overseeing the execution of internal and external communication, setting communication goals and managing budgets. Analytical and resourceful risk minded professional with a track record of mitigating risk, managing crises, and restoring brand reputation in complex environments. Appreciated for adhering to high ethical standards and embracing new challenges.

HARD SKILLS

- Strategic Alignment - Ensuring all communications support broader business objectives
- Crisis Preparedness - Building resilience before problems occur
- Stakeholder Intelligence - Bringing critical external perspectives into C-Suite discussions
- Reputation Management - Proactively shaping how your organization is perceived
- Culture building - Translating vision and values into messages that inspire employees
- Trauma Counselling
- Crisis Intervention
- Risk Assessment

SOFT SKILLS

- Emotional Intelligence
- Interpersonal Abilities
- Adaptability
- Composure Under Pressure

ADVOCACY

- Legal Knowledge
- Charity Law & Governance
- Thesis: Gender Equity & Gender Laws
- Member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR)

WORK HISTORY

PRESS OFFICE MANAGER (CONSULTANT)

NEOM, KSA | January 2025 - Present

- Development of executive profiles, playbooks & messaging
- Development of policies, processes, procedures, mapping
- Crisis, reputation and issues management
- Road mapping, alternative media opportunities (podcasts)
- Collaboration & liaison with regional & international agencies
- Media relations (regional, international)
- Internal communication (announcements, bios, MOU's)

COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT & PART-TIME LAW STUDENT

Zola Ink UAE (Self Employed) | October 2020 - Present

- Support clients with content creation and professional profiling
- Support with drafting internal communication, procedures, for a major hospitality project (Asia)
- Interview research and question setting for a French/Arab consumer publication
- Support with pitch decks, contract preparation, negotiation and frameworks for healthcare HR consultant

REGIONAL DIRECTOR COMMUNICATIONS, LUXURY BRANDS

Accor Middle East & Africa | April 2017 - April 2020

- Drive business results by educating, engaging, and motivating associates through creative, strategic, integrated communications programs designed to reach target audiences across multiple channels
- Support senior executives with storyline development, messaging, and communications delivery
- Develop trusted cross-company and cross-discipline relationships
- Institute new policies and standardized measurement and reporting as part of change management
- Mentored and motivated a team of over 30 marketing communications professionals while directing corporate and consumer agencies in key markets
- Coordinated the incident response team for a range of issues, operational, environmental, technological and reputational issues, ensuring clear communication with stakeholders to minimize media backlash, legal challenges and long-term reputational damage.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

- ISRM Diploma Strategic Risk and Crisis Management (Level 6)
Expected completion Q2, 2026
- MA Communication
Advocacy & Activism
National University Galway
(Honours)
- PG Diploma, Law
The Law Society of Ireland
- PG Diploma,
Digital Marketing Strategy
Dublin Business School
- Diploma,
Public Relations &
Event Management
Fitzwilliam Institute, Ireland

PASSION PROJECT

Founder of Querencia Foundation, supporting primary education for girls in Uganda since 2016.



- Implemented strategic initiatives to rebuild brand loyalty and restore brand credibility following a viral social media issue related to false promotion, resolved through diplomatic channels.
- Organized annual media and crisis training for Executive leaders, and led workshops for regional commercial teams and senior leaders across the business.

DIRECTOR MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS & BRAND TRADE MARKETING

Armani Hotels & Resorts (A JV with Emaar Properties) | June 2012 - December 2015

- Oversaw the integrated marketing and communications programs and team for a luxury hotel situated in the world's tallest tower
- Directed brand marketing efforts for hotels in Dubai and Milan, and two leisure assets
- Supported leisure sales and trade marketing at eight international events annually
- Led a fundraising initiative, raising over \$ 12,000 for the Christina Noble Children's Foundation
- Served on the senior crisis response committee for Burj Khalifa Tower and was part of the executive leadership team
- Chosen as one of twenty top performers in Emaar's cross-company Future Leaders Program, 2013

GROUP MARKETING MANAGER

Emaar Hospitality Group | July 2010 - June 2012

- Oversaw marketing and communications for a portfolio of leisure assets, including the world's highest restaurant, The Yacht Club, The Polo & Equestrian Club and The Address Hotels + Resorts
- Created and executed advertising campaigns, sponsorship deals, partnership promotions, product launches, and year-round tactical activations
- Promoted twice during my tenure with Emaar
- Contributed consistently to a proactive risk mitigation plans, and was operationally certified as a member of Incident Command team for Burj Khalifa.
- Crisis preparedness workshops for all employees

BRAND MANAGER

Private Office of H.H Sheikh Al Nahyan | April 2009 - May 2010

PR ACCOUNT MANAGER, CONCEPT AGENCY, DUBAI MEDIA CITY

Aggreko MEA Leader in Temporary Power Supply
March 2008 - February 2009

EARLY CAREER EXPERIENCE

- Starwood Hotels & Resorts
- The Doyle Collection
- Sun International Table Bay Hotel