

Curriculum vitae

Brett Sangster

Summary information

Name:

Brett Sangster

Contact details:

Address: 118 Trelissick Crescent
Ngaio
Wellington 6035
Home phone: 04 971 1196
Mobile: 022 198 5043
E-mail: brett.sangster@gmail.com

Academic qualifications:

Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Marketing), Massey University 1979

Career summary:

- Self-employed business & marketing communications consultant – Sangster Communication Plus Limited & also Engagementworks Limited (September 2012 to current)
- Communications Manager, Greater Wellington Regional Council (February 2007 to September 2012)
- Director Corporate Communications, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (July 2002 to February 2007)
- Self-employed business & marketing communications consultant – Sangster Consulting Group (From April 1998 to July 2002)
- Corporate Communications Manager, Housing New Zealand Ltd (now Housing New Zealand Corporation) (March 1996 to April 1998)
- Communications Manager, Coal Corporation of NZ Ltd (now Solid Energy New Zealand Ltd) (April 1994 to March 1996)
- Communications Manager, New Zealand Meat Producers Board (now Beef+Lamb New Zealand) (1986-94)
- Public Relations Officer, New Zealand Meat Producers Board (1984-86)
- Manager, Auckland Mailing Service (1982-84)
- Feature writer, New Zealand Farmer magazine (1979-82)

Summary of key skills

Strategic planning & implementation

Strategically developing action plans and then delivering and monitoring the delivery and effectiveness of these strategies.

Change initiation

Identifying and promoting the organisation's vision and values. Eliciting an emotional response from people. Seeking continuous pursuit of excellence.

Ideas generation & promotion

Visualising and developing key messages and primary concepts, then packaging these for communication to the relevant audiences.

Synthesis

Examining a range of facts, opinions, perceptions (positive and negative) and making sense of them. Seeking alignment. From this stating simply and concisely what needs to be done.

Decision making

Making decisions that need to be made, in the organisation's best interests, under pressure. Good instincts for what is right and appropriate, even in ambiguous situations.

High energy levels

Enjoys creating and contributing to a positive fun environment in which to work.

Consultative approach

Hearing what people want and, where possible, creating a framework that allows it to happen. Empowering and supporting people to do what they believe needs to be done.

Proven management skills

- Excellent verbal and written communications
- Crisis and emergency management communications
- Financial management & budgeting
- Staff management
- Project and event management
- Computer skills (Word, Excel, web browsers & associated cloud applications, web analytics tools, social media)

Career experience and achievements

Sangster Communication Plus Limited (September 2012 to current)

Creative Director

Sangster Communication Plus Limited is a multi-faceted agency that works across the full suite of public relations, communication, marketing communication, community engagement and emergency management/crisis communications. Other services include training, coaching and mentoring for communication professionals.

While Sangster Communications Plus is a single operator business, Brett can draw on experienced and highly talented communicators and other professionals, enabling him to assemble project teams that can deliver outstanding results for clients.

Client list:

- CityLink Limited
- In Gear Global Limited
- Ministry of Justice
- New Zealand Society of Anaesthetists Incorporated
- Sport New Zealand
- Stakeholders in Methyl Bromide Reduction Incorporated (STIMBR)
- TeamTalk Limited
- Victoria University

Engagementworks Limited (March 2013 to current)

Director

Engagementworks' mission is through training and support, to enable organisations to have the knowledge and skills to connect effectively with their communities and stakeholders in an environment of inclusiveness grounded on mutual understanding and respect.

From June 2013 Engagementworks will launch a series of training workshops aimed at community engagement practitioners and senior managers responsible for oversight of engagement activities in their organisation.

Client list:

- Ministry for Culture & Heritage
- Greater Wellington Regional Council
- Hawke's Bay Regional Council
- Taranaki Regional Council
- Waipa District Council
- South Waikato Regional Council
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council

Greater Wellington Regional Council (February 2007 to September 2012)

Communications Manager

Greater Wellington Regional Council operates principally under the provisions of the Local Government Act and the Resource Management Act. Its region includes eight territorial authorities (Kapiti Coast District, Porirua City, Masterton District, Carterton District, South Wairarapa District, Upper Hutt City, Hutt City and Wellington City).

The Council is responsible for economic development initiatives throughout the region; water supply for the four cities; river management and flood protection; public transport by road, rail and ferries; erosion control; biodiversity; control of pest plants and animals; regional parks; environmental monitoring and consenting; sustainable transport; and Civil Defence Emergency Management duties.

Responsibilities

This position was one of five reporting to the Group Manager Strategy and Communication. The role was based in Greater Wellington's corporate office in central Wellington.

Eight positions report to the Communications Manager. These roles are responsible for managing media interactions, publications design and production, web functionality, usability and standards compliance, social networking media, special events and internal communications support services. The role also managed a budget of \$1.2 million.

Achievements

- Developing a community engagement strategy and associated resources toolbox for the organisation,
- Streamlining the production of printed materials, reducing the number and cost of these,
- Enhancing the standards of design and production of the organisation's printed materials to ensure good user acceptance,
- Redeveloping the organisation's external web site (on two occasions) taking note of generally accepted internet good practice and user feedback
- Redeveloping the organisation's intranet, making a dull and boring information repository a valued and highly used business tool,
- Building strong relationships with regional media outlets, particularly community newspapers,
- Implementing a community engagement strategy and an internal cross-departmental "virtual team" to manage that,
- Implementing a regular programme of market research to review awareness and understanding of Greater Wellington and the services it provides.

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (July 2002 to February 2007)

Director Corporate Communications

This position was based in MAF's corporate office in Wellington, was a member of MAF's Executive Board reporting to the Director-General (for strategic matters) and to the Deputy Director-General (for pay and rations).

MAF was a complex and diverse Ministry reporting to five Cabinet Ministers (Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Affairs, Biosecurity and Food Safety) and employing 1,600 people based throughout New Zealand.

Responsibilities

Issues management was an essential element of MAF's communications, with the Ministry at the forefront of major public issues such as the Waiheke Island foot and mouth disease hoax, Didymo, painted apple moth and Asian gypsy moth, varroa bee mite, genetically-modified sweet corn, live sheep exports, Hilary Swank and "the Mayfield panther". The Ministry also took a lead with the Government's border control efforts and other cross-agency initiatives such as SARS and Avian Influenza.

The position managed a team of 16 people and an annual budget of \$1.1 million. The Director Corporate Communications had direct control over the communications budget components of MAF's various pest management programmes and emergency responses.

Achievements

- Developing an emergency management communications strategy and associated resources that was used by both the Ministry and its associated Food Safety Authority,
- Developing a comprehensive system of standards and guidelines for managing communications around pest incursion,
- Developing the web site for Biosecurity New Zealand (a business unit within MAF),
- Managing MAF's display stand, attendance roster and associated resources for the annual Mystery Creek farmer Fieldays,
- Tidying up and developing identity standards for MAF's corporate brand and strapline "Enhancing New Zealand's natural advantage",
- Managing media relationships throughout New Zealand and, occasionally, internationally

Sangster Consulting Group (April 1998 to July 2002)

As a self-employed consultant, Brett provided a full range of corporate communications and marketing services to a range of primarily Wellington-based businesses.

Services covered the full spectrum from strategic planning to task implementation, for small and large assignments for a range of organisations from large corporates to small business start-ups.

Clients included:

- Solid Energy New Zealand Ltd (corporate communications services),
- Housing New Zealand Corporation (corporate communications and business consultancy services),
- Gibson Rusden Ltd (also a strategic business partner),
- TelferYoung Ltd (rebranding and relaunch),
- ThorWorld (IT business start-up and new products launch),
- NZ Police (Highway Patrol car launch, together with Gibson Rusden),
- AC15Yachts (new business start-up),
- NEXT Yachts Ltd (new business start-up),
- Telecom NZ Ltd's Year 2000 Programme Office (Y2K communications for business customers),
- NZ Post Ltd (strategic advice on this organisation's statutory publications),
- NZ Association of Optometrists (communications services and quality assurance strategy and documentation), and
- South Wellington Intermediate School (development of a marketing and communications plan to boost roll growth).

Housing New Zealand Ltd (1996 to 1998)

Corporate Communications Manager

This position was based in Housing New Zealand's corporate office in Wellington. Housing New Zealand Ltd was a Crown company established under the Housing Restructuring Act of 1992 to facilitate access to housing for low-income people. It was New Zealand's largest rental housing provider, owning about 67,000 standard rental units. Housing New Zealand was New Zealand's fourth-largest company by asset value and 32nd-largest by turnover.

Responsibilities

- A direct report to the Chief Executive Officer and part of the senior management team.
- Developing corporate communications plans.
- Managing a team of four people.
- Determining and controlling an annual budget of \$1.5 million.
- Managing the company's political relationships (particularly with shareholding Ministers).
- Managing all political enquiries.
- Managing all media, proactively and reactively.
- Ensuring wider levels of understanding in media responses by senior managers.
- Assisting the treasury team to develop tools and key messages to meet the needs of financiers and rating agencies.
- Promoting the custodial role of the company's brand and develop a range of tools to support this.
- Overseeing company marketing procedures and activities.
- Encouraging and supporting local marketing initiatives.
- Developing a framework for consultation for Area Managers to promote a community relationships' network.

Achievements

- Took the emotion and fear out of responding to things that go wrong.
- Created a sensible system for making rational decisions in managing issues.
- Part of a team that created significant management re-organisation supporting an environment allowing locally empowered decision-making.
- Improved communications processes between the company and its tenants, creating a sense of involvement through constant reinforcement of key messages.
- Acted as an advocate for customer service programmes in order to minimise bad press for the business.

Coal Corporation of NZ Ltd (Solid Energy New Zealand Ltd) (1994 to 1996)

Communications Manager

This position was based in Coal Corporation's corporate office in Wellington. Coal Corporation (now called Solid Energy) is a State-Owned Enterprise, is New Zealand's largest coal marketing, processing and mining company. About half of its business is in export markets and this share is growing. It directly employs about 500 people nation-wide, and is a major contributor to the regional economies where it operates. No staff reported to this position.

Responsibilities

- To manage and improve Coal Corporation's public image. This was a combined corporate and marketing communications role.
- Developing the annual corporate and marketing communications plans.
- Developing and managing the annual communications budget (about \$1 million).
- Managing relationships with a range of external service providers, such as PR consultants, market researchers and an advertising agency.
- Providing an internal communications consultancy role.
- Managing media relationships and enquiries.
- Developing a marketing communications strategy and implementing programmes that flowed from this.

Achievements

- Developed the strategic direction for and implemented the "Solid Energy" re-imaging project.
- Co-ordinated the official opening of the Strongman 2 Mine.
- Added the communications components to disaster drills at Huntly East and Wairaki Mines
- Managed public relations issues arising from a Maori occupation of Coal Corporation land at Huntly
- Involved in workplace reform at major mine sites.
- Helped develop the "CoalCare" Management System.

- Co-ordinated the Mount Davy mine development project community liaison programme.
- Revamped the Annual Report, Statement of Corporate Intent, and Interim Report.
- Produced a Corporate Profile and other marketing support materials.
- Managed major trade fair promotions, particularly the Cepsi Conference in Christchurch and the bi-annual coal conference.

New Zealand Meat Producers Board (Beef+Lamb New Zealand) (1984 to 1994)

- **Public Relations Officer (1984 to 1986)**
- **Communications Manager (1986 to 1994)**

Both positions were based at the Meat Board's international headquarters in Wellington. The Meat Producers Board was a statutory regulatory authority empowered to "maximise returns to meat producers and to New Zealand". It was funded by a compulsory levy collected on all sheep, cattle, goats and horses slaughtered in New Zealand. Its primary focus was on export market development.

Responsibilities

The communications role was primarily focussed at improving knowledge and awareness in New Zealand of the Board's role and function (particularly with sheep and beef farmers), key issues facing the meat industry, providing market information and intelligence, and promoting meat consumption-related issues on the New Zealand market. I managed a team of three people and had reporting lines to the Board's Chairman and Chief Executive.

Achievements

- Strategic Plan 1993-2000
- National referendum of meat producers
- Farm Education and Training Association director
- Lamb Cuisine Advisory Panel member
- Overseas visitor programmes

Auckland Mailing Service (1982 to 1984)

Manager

Based at Auckland Mailing Service's premises at Pakuranga. Auckland Mailing Service was then a privately-owned company, employing 20 full-time and 10 part-time staff. Its primary business was as a bulk mail handing company but it was also involved in providing direct mail services for various clients. In my time the company grew from employing a staff of six. NZ Post Ltd now owns this business.

Responsibilities

My job was to manage the operational aspects of this business. This involved strategic planning, work scheduling, materials ordering, liaison with suppliers, staff recruitment and training, equipment maintenance and so on.

Achievements

Most of these were associated with direct mail programmes. The largest of these was co-ordinating the direct mail aspects of American Express's Gold Card launch in New Zealand. I also managed the business' move to new premises and its staff training programme.

New Zealand Farmer magazine (1979 to 1982)

North Island features' writer

Located at the magazine's head office in Auckland. During my time, NZ Farmer was a twice-monthly A4 magazine owned by NZ News Ltd. I reported directly to the editor.

Responsibilities

These involved identifying news stories for the magazine, setting up appointments, interviewing key people, researching additional information and contributing photographs for feature articles that I would write. This involved maintaining an active network of contacts, particularly throughout but also New Zealand-wide.

I was also involved in layout and design of the magazine as well as regularly performing sub-editing duties.

Achievements

The NZ Farmer occasionally ran information supplements. I researched and wrote several of these, including: A Guide to Electric Fencing, A Guide to Training a Working Dog, A Guide to Forest Wood-lot Pruning, A Guide to Farm Computers.

NZ Farmer was a major sponsor of the annual Agriculture Fielddays at Mystery Creek, near Hamilton. I was involved in organising the magazine's stand, and the prototype awards sponsored by the magazine.

Professional affiliations

1986 to current:	Member, International Association of Business Communicators (IABC)
1997 to 2007:	Member, and President, Sales & Marketing Executives International (SMEI) New Zealand (Inc)
2013 to current:	Member of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia

Professional development

2012	International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) community engagement training
2009	“Greater Managers” training programme for Greater Wellington managers
1997	IAS Australasia Ltd “Leaders edge” leadership and communication programme.
1990	NZ Institute of Management “Introduction to general management”

Courses facilitated

I have facilitated training courses for:

- Report writing
- Media management skills
- Word processing (for beginners to “power” users)
- Basic computer skills
- Internet standards and usability
- Internet content migration and standards compliance
- Social networking media.

Personal interests

My wife and I own a 1930s home in Ngaio that we are renovating and landscaping.

We are also keen bikers who enjoy motorcycle touring at every available opportunity.

I’m also passionate about playing my ukuleles.

I am an active computer user both for work and leisure pursuits. I actively use the Internet for both purposes and can be contacted through my accounts on Skype, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.