Marketing Communications: Fifty Ways To Tell Your Story
Saturday, October 6, 8:30–9:20am

Breeze Richardson, director of marketing and communications at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, will present at Conclave to talk about Kansas City's vibrant arts community. She will share the integral part that communications work plays in the success of Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art as she works to build partnerships throughout the business community. Sharing Kemper Museum’s story is one of the ways Breeze has developed important alliances and created opportunities to collaborate. Her presentation will highlight how the intersection between business and art allows the Museum to carry out its mission.

[SLIDE 2]
Introduction

[SLIDE 2]
1. Who is Kemper Museum?

Kemper Museum opened October 2, 1994.

Each year, the museum presents 10–12 exhibitions, featuring established and emerging artists from the United States and around the world, including 3 major exhibitions.

Lectures, film series, performances, and workshops are offered on a regular basis.

In 2017, nearly 100,000 visitors came to Kemper Museum – where admission and parking are always free – including 5,700 school-aged youth who visited for a docent-led tour.

Kemper Museum is a collecting museum – at the core of the Permanent Collection is the Bebe and Crosby Kemper Collection, a gift from the Museum’s co-founders, the late R. Crosby Kemper and his wife Bebe Kemper (now Bebe Hunt), and the Kemper Foundations.

Since Kemper Museum’s opening in 1994, its Permanent Collection has more than tripled. Works in the collection range from those created after the 1913 Armory Show — an important benchmark in modern art — to the present.

In 2017, seven new works were added to the Permanent Collection, including works by Rashid Johnson (you can see it here in the top left photo), Deborah Dancy, Amy Sherald (whose name you might recognize, as she was the artist selected by Michelle Obama to paint her portrait for the National Portrait Gallery), Laura McPhee, David Hockney, José Bedia, and Firelei Báez.

One of the signature exhibitions at the museum is our atrium project, where an artist is commissioned to create a site-specific work for this space. In 2017 it was this work [SLIDE 3] by Firelei Báez, an artist originally from the Dominican Republic, who now lives and works in New York. ...and it was this canvas which was acquired by the Museum for our Permanent Collection.
Both it, and the work by Rashid Johnson, underscore the Museum’s philosophy to, in part, collect works that come from the exhibitions recently on view.

If you have a chance to visit Kemper Museum while you’re here in Kansas City — remember, it’s FREE and right next door(!) open from 10a-4p both today and tomorrow – you’ll see our latest atrium project artist which debuted in August of this year... It’s by an artist named Paul Henry Ramirez. [SLIDE 4] and on the Museum’s smartphone app you can view a really cool time-lapse video of its installation.

2. How is Kemper Museum funded?  
[SLIDE 5]

As a FREE admission FREE parking institution, the museum creates revenue in a number of ways – MANY OF WHICH underscore the intersection between business and art, as articulated as the mission of this institution...

To enrich lives through the experience of contemporary art by exhibiting, collecting, and educating in a free and welcoming environment.

In short, there are three sources:  
Contributed Revenue  
Earned Revenue  
and the Kemper Family Foundations,

...which as you can see account for pretty equal thirds.

Numbers such as what you see here are published annually in our Year in Review, and presented at National Committee each May –

Contributed Revenue includes:
- over $15,000 annually from corporations who give to the museum,
- $85,000 in government grants,
- over $230,000 from individuals, many of whom are prominent civic and business leaders in this community,
- $265,000 from those holding membership with the museum,

...which in 2017 includes 788 Households and Business members...

- over $457,000 from foundations,
- and remarkably just under $465,000 raised in a single night through our annual Gala.

Earned Revenue includes:
- Café Sebastienne – our award-winning restaurant located in the heart of the Museum,
- Special Events –

...which in 2017 included 23 weddings, private dinners, receptions and memorial services, and 41 corporate dinners and receptions...
- our Museum Shop – which carries works by over 50 local artists, art publications (*including our own catalogues*), ceramics, jewelry, textiles, and other items desired by art-friendly museum goers.

...and then there’s also investment earnings, fund allocations, and in some years – such as 2017 – revenue earned from exhibitions curated by Kemper Museum traveling to other museums.

3. Telling our Story

Community Partnerships

There are a few ways that we tell our story that have come about through the development of important alliances and opportunities to collaborate with others in Kansas City *which I thought you might be particularly interested in today.*

[SLIDE 6]

Carrot Gold

Carrot Gold is a program created by an organization called KC Healthy Kids, which works to *grow the demand for local food and keep farmers farming.* It’s a network of restaurants and institutions that are setting the standard for local food purchasing, sustainable kitchen practices and healthy menu options. The growing list of partners includes restaurants, schools, corporate cafeterias, government facilities, grocery stores, value-added producers, and food trucks.

Café Sebastienne has earned 24 CARROT GOLD status; the highest rating given by the program.

*You can learn more about this amazing program at kchealthykids.org.*

[SLIDE 7]

IN Kansas City

Sponsorships by media organizations, such as IN Kansas City, allow for the museum to share its story wider – adding to the earned and paid media opportunities explored in a given year.

This new magazine aims to “be the city and lifestyle content provider, in print, social media, and online, for Kansas Citians interested in what’s happening in the metro.” They state, “We’re all about amazing experiences, music news and reviews, what theater to see, the latest fashion trends, exquisite homes and gardens, restaurant reviews, what’s new and who’s who. And we feature a robust online events calendar that has quickly become the go-to resource for events in Kansas City.”

By promoting signature events – such as our annual Block Party (a free event which over 600 attended this past August) and the Kemper Gala – in their own voice, at no cost to us, sponsorships such as this one are another way we engage with the business community, in this case a major media company, by co-mingling our brands.
For the past two years, KCUMB has given the museum $10,000 to support this special program, now in its second year. Led by volunteer docents, 400 first-year medical students will come to the museum over the next eight months to stretch their tolerance for ambiguity – using artwork to practice key observation skills necessary to be good doctors.

Last month Ovation television came to the museum to document this program – along with our Teen Arts Council, which I will share more about in a minute – for a prime-time broadcast scheduled to air next month as a program they have called, “Arts Across the Heartland.” They recorded over 15 interviews in one day, speaking to medical students, doctors, docents, teens, parents, arts educators, museum professionals, and artists about Kemper Museum.

Their interest in including Kemper Museum in this national storytelling opportunity was in-part driven by the uniqueness of this special program.

Last Spring, Aristocrat Motors – Kansas City's premier luxury automobile dealership, representing Mercedes-Benz, smart, Land Rover, Jaguar, Porsche, and Maserati – reached out to the museum to see if we would be willing to host a fashion shoot for the Fall issue of their magazine, TODAY Kansas City, which is received by over 30,000 homes throughout the Kansas City region who have purchased an Aristocrat Motors vehicle.

In August, they came over for the day-long shoot – resulting in a 10-page spread, which includes a write-up on Kemper Museum, our mission, and the Permanent Collection, writing:

“In shaping its Permanent Collection, the museum strives to reflect the vitality, complexity, and unfolding patterns within modern and contemporary art. In selecting its exhibitions, the museum strives to represent national and international aesthetic and cultural diversity.”

I didn’t pay anything for this. Quite the opposite – in addition to the remarkable exposure this provided to tell our story, Aristocrat Motors became a sponsor of the 2018 Kemper Gala, contributing $5,000.

Speaking of the Gala, the participation in our mission by business leaders like this year’s co-chairs Lisa Garney, a lawyer and certified master plumber who founded LMG Construction, which specializes in commercial plumbing for general contractors and developers, and Lauren Saks Marriman, a Designer & UpCycler behind Indian Summer Collection – a Fair Trade focused Jewelry and Repurposed Vintage Collection – and Founder of BlackBook Music Group, who
most recently became Co-Founder of the social club The Nelle – an “all-inclusive community space for women to use as a both a platform, and a place to plug-in.”

Individuals like them are a big part of our story of the intersection between business and art., as working their networks to galvanizing support for the museum among their peers is partly how nearly half a million dollars is raised during this one night event. There are no speeches, no auction or raffles – it’s just a remarkable party. :)

Sponsors joining Aristocrat this year include Murphy-Hoffman Company, Spencer Fane LLP, World Wide Technology, Cerner Corporation, Company Kitchen, JE Dunn Construction, Sprint Center, and UMB Financial Corporation just to name a few.

In September, KC SPACES magazine ran a feature cover story about the city’s upcoming philanthropic balls and galas – and included Kemper Museum co-chairs Lisa and Lauren. Editor Cynthia Gregorian wrote in her opening editorial “we at SPACES are hoping to make this an annual feature to celebrate others who donate their time and effort to non-profits. Our community is greatly enriched by the time and effort that all volunteers donate.

More great coverage for the museum and its mission – and exposure for Lisa and Lauren to get in front of others who may be inspired by their support.

[SLIDE 13]
Over the years a number of amazing individuals have served in this role – and one of the coolest things to me is that they continue serving, as Kemper Ambassadors, gathering each year to support the new Gala co-chairs and continue raising funds for the museum and its mission.

4. Marketing 101

This kind of earned media takes lots of forms – print reviews and write ups, radio interviews, and television segments – and it’s complemented by paid media and traditional marketing efforts [SLIDE 14] – print ads in magazines, playbills, and newspaper inserts; exterior banners; rack cards and hotel keycards; brochures, member mailings, flyers and postcards; the maintenance of a strong, reliable, mobile-friendly website; social media presence; consistent, reoccurring programming for all ages; professional photography, audio and video work; and opportunities to gain feedback about it all through easy to participate survey efforts.

Promoting our free public events – ranging from TOTS on Tuesday (a collaboration with the Kansas City Public Library) to lectures by authors, artists, scholars, and other prominent community members – aren’t just marketed through our own communication channels – outreach to likeminded organizations who can share the opportunity to participate and learn with their own networks advances our mission as well.

[SLIDE 15]
Recognizing those who support your work is an important communication responsibility as well.

[SLIDE 16]
You have to participate in affiliations – like the Greater Kansas City Attraction Association, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Development Corporation, and Visit KC
our city’s lead tourism agency which runs remarkable programs like “VIP” – the Visitor Influencer Program, which provides influential leaders throughout the region with tools and information about everything Kansas City.

This summer, Kemper Museum hosted the VIP program for a docent-led tour, so they could experience the museum firsthand in order to become better advocates – aiming to make them more likely to recommend the museum when asked about places to go in KC.

[SLIDE 17]
You have to be data-driven – using metrics to inform how you use marketing dollars and pursue new opportunities – and use that data to tell your story... in our 2017 Year in review, for the first time, we created a map of where youth were coming from throughout the region to tour the museum – and who was using our Field Trip Reimbursement program to help cover the costs of those visits.

Financial assistance for this program is provided in part by The Sullivan Family Foundation and Jo Ann and William Sullivan – highlighting another critical strategy to fostering engagement and support for an institution: giving targeted opportunities to support mission-critical elements of the organization.

Here, Kemper Museum provides funds to cover transportation costs for school groups to and from the Museum – no questions asked. Additionally, middle and high schools can request funds to reimburse costs for the substitute teachers often needed during field trip hours.

Seeing exactly where youth were coming from (and where they were not), provides us with valuable information not as easily accessible in spreadsheet form.

5. Engaging the Next Generation

Last, but not least, I want to share one more example of how we’re sharing our story, which I believe has created one of the most important opportunities to collaborate currently available at the museum – our Teen Arts Council.

So my “one piece of advice” for students studying business would be this – get involved in something that stretches your creative thinking.

[SLIDE 18]
Let’s be clear – just as much as anything else, this is about raising the next generation of philanthropic leaders, engaged citizens, artists, business professionals, teachers, and parents seeking community programming for their children who want to support mission-based organizations like Kemper Museum.

The Kemper Museum Teen Arts Council is a youth development program for Kansas City-area teens, in both Kansas and Missouri.

A competitively selected group of up to fifteen 14–17-year-old teen leaders with a shared passion for the arts work with Museum Education staff to develop and manage teen programs for Kemper Museum.
Over the course of the year, [SLIDE 19] they plan teen-focused events, participate in workshops with local artists, train to be a Teen Docent, take part in leadership building opportunities, and plan an end-of-program art exhibition.

[SLIDE 20]
Yesterday two members of the Council appeared live on KCUR, Kansas City’s NPR-affiliate, to talk about their experience curating an exhibition currently on view at the museum, which they titled Flaw(less) – described in the exhibition description as follows:

*Flaw(less)* explores themes of identity, stereotypes, and perception across cultures in works from the Kemper Museum Permanent Collection. These works, dating from 1920 to 2013, present an opportunity to consider our shared experiences in the ways we present ourselves, how we are perceived, and what we may consider to be flaws in our appearance as we are subjected to the gaze of others through generations.

And for both the exhibition and the variety of programming they’ve created over the past year, they led the way with marketing – [SLIDE 21] creating flyers and postcards... and one-inch buttons... using repurposed paper, affixed onto promotional cards which provided event specifics, which they then distributed at school and throughout their communities as a way to promote their work and spread the word about the Teen Arts Council at Kemper Museum.

(FINAL THOUGHT) I would be remiss if I didn’t share one more thing:

Engaging the Next Generation in Kansas City also means reaching out in new ways – [SLIDE 22] In Kansas City today, 10% of households identify as Hispanic or Latino... with 5.7% of Kansas City households speaking Spanish at home. Nationwide that number is now around 13% (or 37.5 million households), making it the second most common language spoken in the United States. For reference, the third most common language spoken in the US is Chinese, with an estimated 1% (or 2.9 million households) of the total US population living in a household where Chinese is spoken.

But here’s where the numbers are really important: In some parts of our community, as much as 20% of the total population is living in homes where Spanish is spoken – and when you look specifically at children ages 5-17 years of age, that number is as high as 37% – or 1 in 3.

Thinking back to that map: every fourth grader in the Kansas City Kansas Public School District tours Kemper Museum as part of their arts curriculum – that district is located in Wyandotte County, where the numbers I just cited come from, where Spanish is more widely spoken than anywhere else in the city.

So, if you’re told at the end of the tour to “Come back! It’s always free. Bring your family.” – How much more welcoming is that invitation to the 1 in 3 children who speak Spanish at home, when the street pole banners lining the way to our doors are in your tongue too? When tours are available from Spanish-speaking docents? When the staff at the Visitor Services Desk speaks fluent Spanish?

On Saturday, November 3, Kemper Museum will be hosting the first Spanish-Language Family Art Day. Visitors will be invited to tour the art installation *Sweet On* by artist Paul Henry Ramirez.
with a Spanish-speaking docent, create artwork with local artist José Faus, and enjoy some food! This free event, including the art-making activity, will all be presented in Spanish, and all materials will be provided. We look forward to it being the first of many such events.

6. In Conclusion

[SLIDE 22 – Thank you!]

Well I don’t know if you were keeping count, but over the course of those 20 SLIDES my remarks included more than 50 ways Kemper Museum is telling its story – and it is my hope you see clearly how communications work plays a pivotal role in the success of this institution.

I am happy to tell you more about anything presented here, or answer any questions you may have about marketing communications.

Thank you again for inviting me to be part of this important event!