

POSITION PROFILE

Chief Communications & Marketing Officer
Make-A-Wish Metro New York & Western New York

New York, NY





Chief Communications & Marketing Officer

Reporting To President & CEO

Direct Reports Senior Manager, Editorial & Design Strategy; Associate Director, Digital Communications & Analytics

Location New York City (Midtown headquarters; hybrid: minimum 3 days/week in office)

Make-A-Wish Metro New York and Western New York

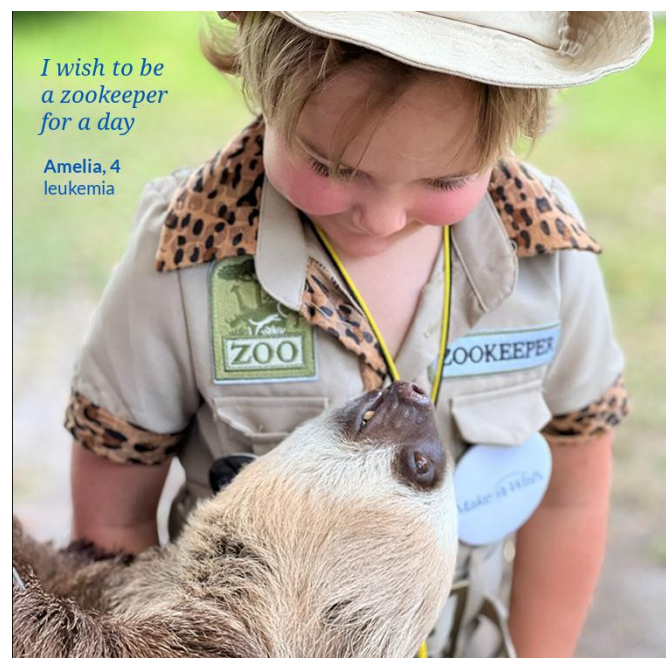
<https://wish.org/newyork>

About the Organization

Make-A-Wish is a global organization dedicated to granting life-changing wishes to children with critical illnesses. Founded in 1980, Make-A-Wish operates on the belief that a wish experience can be a powerful force for hope, healing, and emotional strength during a difficult time. By partnering with donors, volunteers, and communities, Make-A-Wish creates joyful experiences that give children renewed energy and motivation, helping them better cope with their medical treatments. From meeting a favorite celebrity to going on a dream vacation, each wish is tailored to the child's imagination, offering them and their families a moment of happiness and relief amidst the challenges they face.

Make-A-Wish America serves as the national organization supporting a network of local affiliates that bring the mission to life in their communities. The local organizations operate as independent 501(c)3s, operating under the strong Make-A-Wish brand to advance its mission, standards, and policies within specific territories. The relationship is collaborative: Make-A-Wish America offers branding, fundraising tools, training, and national partnerships, while the local chapters focus on deepening relationships with wish grantees and their families, building the community of Make-A-Wish alumni, and cultivating a strong local network of donors and volunteers. This structure allows the organization to maintain a unified national presence while ensuring that each wish is personalized and locally driven, reflecting the unique needs of the communities they serve.

Make-A-Wish Metro New York and Western New York serves the New York City metropolitan area, Long Island, and the western region of the state, including Buffalo and Rochester. Since its founding in 1983, the chapter has granted over 8,700 wishes. It works closely with a dedicated network of healthcare providers, volunteers, and donors to create personalized, life-changing wish experiences. With an annual operating budget of approximately \$15 million, the chapter relies on private donations to fund wish-granting and mission programs. Contrary to common belief, only a small portion of wish-related services are donated - most wish costs are covered by the organization itself.





Scope and Responsibilities

About the Role

The Chief Communications & Marketing Officer (CCMO) is a senior executive responsible for advancing the organization's mission through brand stewardship, strategic communications, integrated marketing, and digital innovation. This role drives a comprehensive marketing and communications framework that strengthens brand identity, expands audience reach, amplifies fundraising and revenue generation, drives mission advancement, and enhances the organization's reputation.

A key member of the Executive Leadership Team, the CCMO partners across the organization to develop communication and marketing strategies that drive enhanced organizational impact, reach, and innovation. The CCMO will lead and inspire a high-performing team across brand, communications, content, digital marketing, and media relations, while fostering cross-departmental collaboration for growth. The organization's internal mantra that "we are all wish-makers, we are all fundraisers, we are all storytellers" demonstrates the shared sense of purpose and collective responsibility. The Brand & Communications team supports via engagement across the Mission and Development teams – ensuring alignment, amplifying shared successes, and fueling growth and impact.



Specific Responsibilities

Brand Identity & Reputation Management

- Steward and evolve the organization's brand, ensuring consistency, authenticity, and strength across all platforms, initiatives, and audiences.
- Collaborating closely with Make-A-Wish America, leverage an exceptionally strong brand by utilizing national guidelines to maintain brand integrity and enhance organizational reputation.
- Manage brand positioning and storytelling efforts to drive increased awareness, engagement, and support.
- Steward a well-known and trusted brand while proactively addressing and correcting misconceptions about the organization's mission, impact, and work to ensure consistent, authentic engagement with new and existing audiences.

Communications Strategy

- Develop and implement comprehensive communication strategies across digital, social, public relations, and traditional channels.
- Ensure all initiatives are aligned with and support the success of organizational goals, fundraising campaigns, and revenue objectives.
- Stay abreast of trends and innovations to ensure marketing approaches remain cutting-edge and effective.
- Oversee and collaborate on the integration and optimization of technology platforms relevant to marketing and communications.

Strategic Communications

- Build and oversee an integrated communications strategy covering media relations, executive communications, crisis communications, and internal communications.
- Serve as a key advisor to the CEO/President and Board on messaging, media positioning, and reputation management.



Cross Departmental and National Collaboration

- Work closely with Development, Finance, Mission, and national Make-A-Wish America teams to ensure integrated communications and marketing support for all major initiatives.
- Foster strong partnerships across departments to drive mission outcomes and organizational growth.
- Cultivate and maintain a strong, proactive, and collaborative relationship with Make-A-Wish America, recognizing our position as a leading chapter and key strategic partner.
- Ensure alignment with national brand, communications, and marketing initiatives while advocating for chapter needs and priorities.
- Model best-in-class partnership behaviors that reflect the chapter's leadership role within the broader Make-A-Wish America network.

Fundraising and Mission Alignment

- Collaborate closely with the Development and Mission teams to ensure communications strategies drive donor engagement, revenue growth, volunteer engagement, and medical outreach.
- Support donor cultivation, campaigns, and case for support development through compelling storytelling.

Digital Marketing & Online Presence

- Lead cross-channel digital marketing strategy and efforts, including website management, SEO, email marketing, social media and content marketing.
- Innovate and optimize digital experiences to expand reach, improve supporter engagement, and drive giving.
- Ensure strong analytics and data-driven decision-making inform all digital strategies.

Content Development & Engagement

- Oversee the creation of high-quality, compelling content - including blog posts, videos, infographics, and multimedia campaigns - that resonate with diverse audiences.
- Ensure storytelling aligns with brand voice, mission, and strategic initiatives across all platforms.

Media Relations & Public Relations Management

- Manage, maintain, and leverage relationships with media outlets, journalists, and influencers to achieve top-tier media coverage.
- Collaborate with the Make-A-Wish America PR team on national media relationships (many of which are based in NYC) to support national communications initiatives and on reputation management during sensitive or high-stakes situations.

Analytics & Performance Measurement

- Define, track, and analyze success metrics for marketing, communications, and digital engagement initiatives.
- Provide regular reporting to leadership and the Board to demonstrate impact and inform future strategies.

Emotional & Mental Well-Being
Wishes have a positive impact on the emotional well-being of wish kids, their families and those involved in a wish.

| 8 out of 10 wish kids | 9 out of 10 wish parents | 100% of medical providers |
|---|---|--|
| reported that their wish experience helped them overcome hopelessness, depression and loneliness. | saw their child's emotional well-being improve with a wish. | report that the wish experience improves a child's — and their own — emotional well-being. |





Team Leadership

- Lead and support a high-performing team by providing mentorship and fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, and excellence.
- Maintain strong teamwork across a remote and hybrid staff to ensure alignment, engagement, and professional growth.

Analytics & Performance Measurement

- Define, track, and analyze success metrics for marketing, communications, and digital engagement initiatives.
- Provide regular reporting to leadership and the Board to demonstrate impact and inform future strategies.

Internal Communications

- Oversee internal communications to ensure clear, consistent, and engaging messaging that aligns staff and key stakeholders with organizational priorities and initiatives.
- Partner with HR and leadership to support culture-building communications.

Key Selection Criteria

- 10+ years of senior leadership experience in brand management, communications, marketing, and digital strategy.
- Proven track record leading successful brand, communications, and fundraising-aligned marketing efforts.
- Deep expertise in digital marketing, social media strategy, content development, and media relations.
- Significant experience designing strategic objectives and plans that support organizational goals.
- Strong knowledge of and experience in the Metro New York market, combined with the ability to navigate and adapt strategies for regional differences (e.g., Buffalo, Rochester, and Long Island).
- Exceptional writing, storytelling, editing, and executive communications skills and experience engaging a wide variety of audiences and stakeholders.
- Proven experience leading a collaborative, high-performing team to drive shared goals, excellence, and retention.
- Executive presence, strategic mindset, and outstanding interpersonal skills to influence and collaborate at the highest levels.
- Strong data analysis skills and experience using metrics to drive optimization and innovation; experience with Salesforce preferred but not required.
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in Communications, Marketing, Business, or related fields strongly preferred.

Critical Success Factors

- Brand and marketing leadership
- Cross-functional collaboration and influence
- Metrics-driven decision-making and process optimization
- Results-driven approach and focus on performance measurement
- Digital innovation and audience growth
- Fundraising communications integration
- Media relations and crisis management
- Clear, candid communication style
- Trusting and respectful leadership style
- Inspirational, mission-driven team leadership



Contact Information

The Nonprofit Practice of DHR Global has been exclusively retained to assist with this search. Please direct all inquiries, nominations, and applications to any of the individuals listed below:

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