



SENIOR DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

American Conference

POSITION SUMMARY

The Senior Director of Strategic Communications serves as the conference's primary strategic communications leader and day-to-day media spokesperson. As college athletics continues to evolve, this leader will help shape how the American is understood by fans, media, member institutions and commercial partners. The role protects and elevates the conference's brand and reputation through proactive storytelling, disciplined messaging, and high-performance media operations. This leader also drives an integrated communications strategy across football, championships, and priority conference initiatives while setting the standard for written communications, digital publishing, and organizational messaging.

POSITION DETAILS

- Department: Communications and External Affairs
- Location: Position is based in Irving, Texas
- Travel: Regular travel required, including nights and weekends during peak seasons and championships
- Supervisory scope: Directly supervises a communications and external team, including two Directors of Communications and communications team members

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

- Reports to: Chief Brand & Communications Officer
- Direct reports: Directors of Communications (2), communications team members
- Key partners: Conference leadership and staff; member institution communications leaders; championship and event operators; digital and content teams; sponsorship and business partners; external media and platform partners

THE ROLE AND CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Senior Director is a trusted advisor, exceptional communicator and respected leader who thrives in fast-moving, high-visibility environments. They combine strategic thinking with operational excellence, balancing executive counsel, media relations, crisis readiness, and day-to-day execution. They understand how communications shapes organizational reputation and confidently advise leadership through both opportunities and challenges. This candidate pairs sharp judgment with speed and accuracy under deadline, and consistently produces crisp, AP-style writing that elevates the conference's voice and protects credibility. They have deep experience leading football communications, managing championship and media day operations, and coordinating seamlessly with campus communicators, coaches, and national and regional media. Beyond day-to-day media operations, this leader understands how football communications influence conference reputation, competitive positioning, and national perception throughout the season. They also demonstrate confidence in issue and crisis readiness, including scenario planning, approval discipline, and executive preparation. The ideal leader develops people, sets clear standards, and uses media intelligence and social listening tools such as **Meltwater** and **SentiOne** to translate insights into proactive planning and strategy.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Spokesperson leadership and media relations

- Serve as a strategic advisor to conference leadership on communications implications surrounding major organizational decisions, emerging issues, and reputational opportunities
- Lead day-to-day media relations strategy and execution across conference priorities.
- Respond to inbound media requests with speed, accuracy, and message discipline.
- Actively manage inbound requests for conference stakeholders through the media request portal.
- Proactively create and pitch stories and opportunities that elevate the conference and its members.
- Build and maintain relationships with national and regional reporters, editors, and producers.
- Coordinate communications activity with institutional communications leads on conference and national issues.

Football communications leadership

- Lead communications strategy for the conference's highest-profile sport, shaping national narratives while overseeing day-to-day football communications operations.
- Own football communications strategy across the full season cycle.
- Write and distribute football communications, including game-day notes packets, individual game previews, and preseason and postseason awards releases.
- Manage on-site communications operations for the conference's football championship.
- Oversee logistical and media operations for the annual football Media Day.

Championship communications and event operations

- Coordinate publicity efforts for conference sports and championships.
- Oversee the coordination of logistics and media relations efforts for conference championships and basketball media days.
- Represent the conference on-site at select regular-season and postseason events.
- Serve as communications liaison with head coaches and sport committees for select sports.
- Serve as the primary communications contact for additional sports, as assigned.

Strategic communications, issues, and crisis readiness

- Develop and execute annual communications priorities aligned with the conference's strategic, competitive, and business objectives.
- Partner with conference leadership to anticipate communications needs surrounding governance, business initiatives, competitive issues, and conference priorities.
- Plan and execute strategic and crisis communication strategies and messaging, including scenarios, escalation pathways, and approvals.
- Monitor emerging narratives, reputational risks and position conference with clarity and credibility.
- Prepare the Commissioner and other conference staff for media interviews and public speaking events, as applicable.
- Develop executive-ready materials, including talking points, Q-and-A documents, briefing memos, and speeches.

Writing, editorial quality control, and distribution

- Write and distribute all broad-based national communications and press releases.
- Ensure every external communication reflects a consistent conference voice, reinforces strategic priorities, and strengthens organizational credibility.
- Establish standards and approval workflows that improve speed, accuracy, and alignment across conference staff, member institutions, and external partners.

Digital, web, and platform strategy

- Serve as the primary liaison for management of the conference website and ensure quality control for publishing and content standards.
- Provide guidance on content and communications strategy for the conference's digital platforms, including social media.
- Partner with the digital content team on strategic website and social content and write extensive copy for web and conference social media accounts.

Business intelligence, analytics, and insights

- Lead communications intelligence and analytics to inform proactive planning and rapid response decision-making for announcements, championships, major events, and sensitive issues.
- Use media monitoring and social listening to identify emerging narratives, stakeholder sentiment shifts, and reputational risks.
- Produce executive-ready insights that inform communications strategy, leadership decision-making, and long-term reputation management.
- Translate data into clear recommendations on messaging, timing, channel strategy, and spokesperson positioning.
- Maintain monitoring protocols, alert thresholds, and escalation workflows tied to conference approvals and crisis plans.

Academic awards and institutional recognition

- Handle all media and public relations duties for the conference's academic awards programs and institutional recognition initiatives.

Statistics, software, and member support

- Act as primary statistical liaison between the conference and member schools.
- Deliver up-to-date software to member schools and provide guidance in accordance with conference policies.

People leadership and team performance

- Lead and mentor a high-performing communications team through coaching, accountability, clear standards, and a culture of continuous improvement.
- Set coverage plans and sport assignments that support consistent service and premium execution across the conference calendar.

YEAR-ONE SUCCESS FACTORS

- Established as a trusted communications advisor to conference leadership.
- Increased national visibility through proactive media strategy and differentiated storytelling.
- Implemented communications intelligence and analytics that improve planning, issue readiness, and executive decision-making.
- Elevated consistency, quality, and speed across all conference communications.
- Premium execution of football Media Day and football championship communications operations.
- Strengthened relationships with member institution communicators and key national media.
- Established measurable benchmarks for earned media quality, share of voice, sentiment, and reputation growth.

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in communications, public relations, marketing, media, journalism, or a related field required.
- Seven-plus years of experience in athletics communications, media operations, public relations, or a related field required.
- Strong problem-solving, critical thinking, and time management skills.
- Excellent journalistic writing and editing skills with command of AP style.
- Experience in media relations and crisis management, including rapid response planning and execution.
- Proficient with Microsoft Office Suite and relevant communications-related software.
- Proficient with media intelligence, monitoring, and social listening tools such as Meltwater and SentiOne, or comparable platforms.
- Ability to design and deliver analytics and executive reporting, including share of voice, sentiment analysis, message pull-through, and campaign performance insights, to support proactive planning and reactive response for events and announcements.
- Demonstrated knowledge of intercollegiate athletics administration.
- Ability to maintain punctual attendance and timely correspondence.

WHY THIS ROLE

The American is building the next chapter of its story. This role will help define how the conference is represented nationally, strengthen trust with member institutions, elevate competitive achievements, and ensure every communication reflects the ambition of the conference.

APPLICATION PROCESS

A letter of application, resume, examples of work as appropriate, and a list of at least three professional references should be forwarded via email as outlined below. ***The application deadline is July 31, 2026.***

Lois DeBlois, Executive Assistant for Administration (ldeblois@theamerican.org)

Compensation is commensurate with qualifications and experience and includes participation in the conference's employee benefit plan. The American Conference is an equal opportunity employer. The Conference does not discriminate against applicants for employment on the basis of their membership in any protected class under federal or state law.