Human Resources

Ottawa Citizen

1101 Baxter Rd.

Ottawa, ON K2C 3M4

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great enthusiasm that I apply for this role as Assistant News Editor at the Ottawa Citizen. To date, my work experience has been entirely based around news reporting, editing and the convergence of print and digital media. Adding to that experience is my journalism degree from Carleton University, which provided me with the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to thrive in the rapidly changing newspaper world.

This landscape is now dominated by media convergence, where content is delivered across multiple technologies from smartphones to tablets and creating a readership with a short attention span—demanding news on every format immediately. This shift is changing both the way content is created by journalists and how readers are engaging with it, furthering a total cultural convergence. Major media are adapting to these changes and experimenting with new systems: The New York Times holds NYT-branded speaking events and the Economist sells analysis and forecasting services. Simply put, I understand this digital transition and the challenges it presents to publications like the Ottawa Citizen.

Over the past several years, I believe my journalism and marketing work has prepared me well for this position. Currently I work as a freelance journalist, writing feature stories for Ottawa Life Magazine, Air Canada’s enRoute magazine and EF Magazine. I also work as a production assistant for Daytime Ottawa and Talk Ottawa through the volunteer program at Rogers TV. These roles keep me on top of the Ottawa journalism scene, allowing me to stay current with local news and events while continually expanding my network.

Before my freelance work, I was a Writer/Editor and Project Manager at Ascribe Marketing Communications Inc. While there, in addition to rigorous writing and editing duties, I managed the production flow of the entire company; this involved tracking project details, liaising with clients, managing the other writers and running the company’s website and social media presences. For Ascribe’s digital strategy projects, I contributed to the restructuring of entire websites, re-wrote and edited entire webpages and developed multi-platform social media strategies. Much of this work involved modernizing old websites, including optimizing them for mobile devices, incorporating web analytics software and tagging content for search engine optimization. Some of these clients included Alcatel-Lucent, the Canada School of Public Service and the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Prior to Ascribe, I was Director of Operations and Associate Editor at Ottawa Life Magazine. Responsible for the ‘heart and soul’ of the publication, I oversaw much of the editorial process as well as the re-launch and re-imagining of the entire website. As a features writer, I conducted interviews and wrote thoroughly researched articles on a variety of local issues including Ottawa’s waste management system, LRT, municipal elections and former Mayor Larry O’Brien’s court battles. Responsible for rebuilding and then managing the publication’s website, I contracted a web infrastructure consultant to streamline its layout and navigation, incorporate SEO and analytics, and build a user-friendly content management system to allow for easy updating and maintenance of the site. Another component of this process included using Location Based Services and Mobile Marketing to target site visitors with local events and advertising. By leveraging the website’s data using mapping software, we were able to extract valuable user information, which also contributed to the success of the newly designed website. Additionally, my Photoshop skills ensured properly formatted photos and advertising graphics. I also led its social media campaign (including contests on Facebook and Twitter) which increased website visitors, promoted greater interaction with readers and attracted a host of new advertising clients.

At the outset of my journalism career, I was a general assignment reporter and photographer at two community newspapers, the Hinton Parklander in Alberta and the News EMC here in Ottawa. Covering breaking news and a range of beats at both publications – from municipal politics to sporting events and senior issues – I also assisted with the layout design of each newspaper and the posting of articles online. From my time at the EMC – as well as my more recent roles – I have gained a rock-solid understanding of important local issues and an excellent list of Ottawa contacts at all levels of government, in the media and in the private sector.

More than ever, newspapers need staff that are digital natives yet experienced enough to understand principles of solid journalism. I firmly believe I am both, and would look forward to serving the Ottawa Citizen’s efforts to expand and improve its digital presence. Given the opportunity, I would look forward to speaking with you in person.

Many thanks for your time and consideration,

Kimberly Lochhead

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