

Museum Arts PR

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Museum Arts PR

- Focuses on managing how museums and their exhibitions are presented to the public
- Includes: promoting events, managing media relations, handling crisis communication, and engaging with the community and stakeholders
- The goal is to increase attendance, enhance the museum's reputation, and ensure its programs reach a broad and relevant audience

Compare & Contrast

Kimbell Art Museum

- Smaller PR, team consists of 5 people
 - Local/regional focus
 - Uses an outside agency as well
- Target audience
 - Local visitors
 - Art community
- Minimalist digital presence
- Quiet appreciation



The Met

- Massive PR Team
 - Global Campaigns
 - Events
- Handles global controversies
- Target Audience:
 - Tourists
 - Diverse global audience
 - Art lovers
- Larger digital presence and reputation
- High profile



Job Outlook

Typical responsibilities:

- Writing press releases for exhibitions, events, or artist features
- Preparing for possible crisis communication instances
- Overseeing social media, newsletters, and content creation
- Building relationships with media outlets, artists, and the public
- Collaborating with marketing and development teams

Skills:

- Communication
- Writing & editing
- Media

Positions:

- Art museums
- Art focused PR agency
- Cultural institutions
- Commercial art galleries



Drew Isom

DONOR RELATIONS, KIMBELL ART MUSEUM



Career

Timeline



Career

Donor Relations, Kimbell Art Museum

- Been at the Kimbell Art Museum for 7 years
 - **Connections!!!**
- Donor relations
 - Memberships
 - Corporate relations
 - Grant writings

Typical work day:

- Lots of administrative work
- Phone calls
 - Questions
- Planning for the future
- Curating messages for the public
 - Prepared with the best possible and detailed answers



Experience at the Kimbell

What unique challenges come with working in PR for an art museum compared to other industries?



- Prepare for a variety of interpretations
- Have the necessary precautions for potentially controversial exhibits

Crisis Communication

- The Modern Museum & Amon Carter Controversies
- Both happened within the last year



Other Museums

Kimbell is special compared to other art museums because they do not have a development staff, it is just him. Museum is a trust fund child, they are taken care by their foundation. Museum is family run and operated. Pr issues are seen as being able to portray political issues through their art which can cause problems or seen as controversial. They have talking points for those talking to the public in order to address issues to look out for the museum as a whole.

Advice

Drew Isom

- Connections are important & getting your foot into the door
- Everyone starts at the bottom
- Don't box yourself into one job
 - Be willing to take on and learn other systems
- Stay ahead of the public and be prepared for what others may think

References

- Drew Isom, personal communication, March 31, 2025
- Fornoff, Marcheta. "Carter Museum Quietly Closes, Reopens 'Cowboy' Exhibition with Mature Content Warning." Fort Worth Report, 17 Oct. 2024, fortworthreport.org/2024/10/17/carter-museum-quietly-closes-reopens-cowboy-exhibition-with-mature-content-warning/.
- Fornoff, Marcheta. "No Charges Against Fort Worth Museum After Allegations That Exhibit Included Child Porn." Fort Worth Report, 25 Mar. 2025, <https://fortworthreport.org/2025/03/25/no-charges-against-fort-worth-museum-after-allegations-that-exhibit-included-child-porn-2/> .

Thank you