

Strategic Communication: Advertising & PR

What Can I Do With This Major? • Career Pathways

University of St. Thomas

Strategic Communication with a concentration in Advertising & PR at St. Thomas prepares graduates to shape how organizations are perceived — through paid media, earned media, brand campaigns, and crisis communications. This is one of the most directly career-applicable communication degrees available, with clear pathways into advertising agencies, PR firms, in-house brand teams, digital marketing, and corporate communications. Strategic communicators combine creative instinct with analytical discipline to build campaigns that move people and markets.

CONVENTIONAL CAREER TRACKS

All roles below are accessible with a bachelor's degree and 0–2 years of experience (internships count).

Track	What you'll do	Sample Job Titles (BS)
Advertising & Account Management	Manage client relationships, campaign strategy, and creative execution at advertising agencies or in-house brand teams.	■ Account Coordinator ■ Account Executive (agency) ■ Media Planner / Buyer ■ Campaign Manager ■ Brand Manager (entry) ■ Advertising Analyst
Public Relations & Earned Media	Build and protect organizational reputations through media relations, press releases, events, and crisis communications.	■ PR Associate ■ Media Relations Specialist ■ Account Coordinator (PR agency) ■ Communications Coordinator ■ Press Secretary (entry) ■ Crisis Communications Analyst
Digital Marketing & Social Media	Plan and execute paid and organic digital campaigns across search, social, email, and display channels.	■ Digital Marketing Specialist ■ Social Media Manager ■ Paid Media Analyst ■ SEO / SEM Specialist ■ Email Marketing Coordinator ■ Performance Marketing Analyst
Brand Strategy & Creative	Develop brand positioning, messaging frameworks, and creative concepts that differentiate organizations in competitive markets.	■ Brand Strategist ■ Copywriter ■ Creative Coordinator ■ Content Strategist ■ Brand Communications Analyst ■ Creative Account Manager
Corporate & Nonprofit Communications	Manage internal and external communications for organizations across industries.	■ Communications Coordinator ■ Corporate Communications Specialist ■ Nonprofit Marketing Manager ■ Development Communications Writer ■ Alumni Relations Coordinator ■ Public Affairs Specialist

NON-CONVENTIONAL & EMERGING TRACKS

Paths that sit at unexpected intersections — often less competitive and equally rewarding.

Emerging Area	Roles You Might Not Expect
Political & Issue Advocacy	Political Campaign Strategist • Issue Advocacy Communications Director • Political Ad Buyer • Digital Organizing Coordinator • Ballot Initiative Campaign Manager • Political Consultant

Entertainment & Sports Marketing	Sports Marketing Coordinator • Entertainment PR Associate • Talent Publicist (entry) • Influencer Marketing Manager • Brand Partnership Coordinator • Sports Sponsorship Analyst
Healthcare & Pharmaceutical Marketing	Healthcare Marketing Coordinator • Pharmaceutical Brand Manager • Patient Communications Specialist • Health System Marketing Analyst • Medical Device Marketing Associate
Entrepreneurship & Agency Founding	Boutique PR Agency Founder • Freelance Strategist / Consultant • Social Media Agency Founder • Brand Consulting Practice • Creator Economy Manager • Independent Creative Director

WHERE A GRADUATE DEGREE TAKES YOU

A graduate degree meaningfully expands your ceiling and opens leadership, research, and specialized roles.

M.S. Strategic Communication / Integrated Marketing	Communications Director, VP Marketing, Chief Communications Officer, Senior Account Supervisor.	Deepens strategic communication and research expertise — the credential for senior agency and corporate communications leadership.
M.B.A. (Marketing)	Chief Marketing Officer, Brand Director, VP Marketing, Marketing Strategy Consultant.	Pairs strategic communication expertise with business leadership — the most common graduate path for those targeting senior marketing and brand roles.
M.A. Communication / PR	Senior PR Manager, Agency Account Director, Communications Research Director, University Faculty.	Graduate credential for those who want to deepen their communication theory, research, and strategic practice.
Certificate Programs (Earned / Short)	Google Ads, Meta Blueprint, HubSpot, APR (Accredited in PR) — stackable credentials that signal specific platform and professional expertise.	Many employers prioritize demonstrated platform expertise; certifications are low-cost, fast, and immediately applicable.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- Build a campaign portfolio with real or spec work — strategy briefs, media plans, creative concepts, and results data. Agencies want to see how you think.
- Earn Google Ads, Meta Blueprint, and HubSpot certifications before graduation — they signal digital marketing fluency that most entry-level employers require.
- Pursue an agency internship — Twin Cities agencies like Fallon, Barkley, Weber Shandwick, and Edelman all offer internship programs that frequently convert to offers.
- Develop analytical skills alongside creative instincts — the best strategists can write a creative brief and read a campaign performance dashboard with equal fluency.
- Study the APR (Accredited in Public Relations) credential — it's the professional designation of the PR industry and available after a few years of experience.
- The Twin Cities is a major advertising market — home to national agencies, Fortune 500 brand teams, and a growing number of digital-first media companies.

This guide reflects current workforce trends and is updated annually. Job titles may vary by employer, industry, and market. Visit the UST Career Development Center for personalized advising and employer connections.