



# Smeal Marketing Alumni Spotlight



Thou dist mold us, dear old State

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# Alumni Messages

The Marketing community is at a tipping point. No longer can we focus solely on the functional needs of customers and financial expectations of investors.

## ***Brands today increasingly play a broader role in society***

- a role that may include helping protect our planet's natural resources, fighting for racial justice and equality, or defending human rights of workers throughout their supply chains.

Fortunately, customers and investors also recognize the broader role brands must play in today's world. As a result, brands can do well by doing good. But it will not be easy.

Reducing carbon emissions, eliminating plastic packaging waste, or working to eradicate child labour in cocoa farming, for example, often adds costs that cannot be easily offset through pricing.



# Nestlé

So, marketers will need to tell compelling stories about the environmental and societal actions and performance of their brands and products in order to win. This is what makes marketing in 2021 and beyond so challenging and exciting.

While Smeal will help prepare you for career success, the scale and nature of positive impact you deliver as a marketer is in your hands and those of the teams you lead and inspire. I wish you great success!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Buday". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.



TOM BUDAY, '80

*Former Senior Vice President, Head of  
Marketing and Consumer  
Communication*

**NESTLÉ**

I am a lucky man.

I have been fortunate to be able to build a life that affords me not only what I need, but also what I enjoy. However, I know that this alone is not what makes one a success. Values are what make a person a true success. I was raised to embrace many important values, but none more worthy than “giving is more important than receiving”.

Over the past several years, and what I hope will be many more to come, I have had the privilege to work with Smeal and the Marketing Department to better prepare students for what they will encounter when they enter the work world. This isn't about lectures or book knowledge, but rather about preparation so they are better equipped for real-world marketing scenarios and situations. This process of passing along the things I've learned – both personally and professionally – to aspiring Smeal marketing students has been and is one of the most fulfilling experiences I have had.

Watching the students in action shows me what they could actually do in the real world....the thinking, the creativity, the teamwork, the thoughtful questions are just some of the attributes that establish what success could look like. This always gets me energized when I am surrounded by such motivated students.

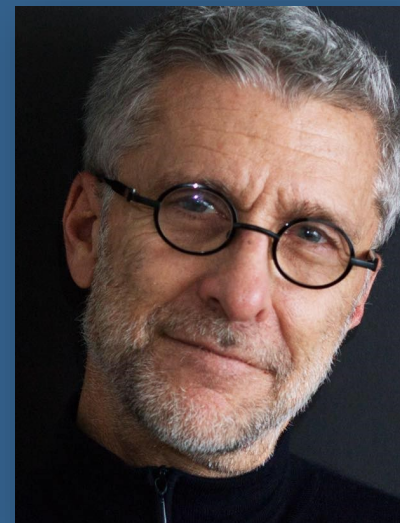
The innovation we've been able to bring to students has allowed us to offer real world, experiential learning opportunities that are a critical component of educating and training for careers. This holds true whether it was through participation in the Saxbys Experiential Learning Platform, coordinating efforts with the Penn State Prime Leadership team on conducting annual unique panel discussions such as *Forging A Career in Branding*, or running a structured positioning workshop during an introductory or advanced marketing course.

One may ask why I was an accounting major. At that time, and from my high school days of reading *The Wall Street Journal*, I thought that having a financial degree was going to be most instrumental in where my career path would take me. And I took my fair share of multiple marketing and analytics courses. Today, as I utilize my entrepreneurial spirit and financial acumen in my business,

***it is marketing that drives my passion, creativity, and ability to create a market.***

Working with Penn State as a Smeal alum is rewarding for me because I see the benefits it has for students and that encourages me to continue my focus on expanding such initiatives with personal student engagement.

And this, this is why I am one very lucky man.



TIMMY GARDE, '78

*Chief Innovation Leader, Life Sciences*

**LevLane Advertising**

levlane  
who loves ya?

***If I had to select a major tomorrow, marketing would be my first choice.***

Every Smeal degree provides an exceptional foundation to develop the critical knowledge, capabilities, and perspectives the marketplace demands. But for me, a career in marketing integrates business acumen with creativity and a focus on the customer that continues to intrigue me to this day.

Marketing is integral to every business as it:

- Connects the right customers to the right product to drive growth
- Provides insights on the marketplace and the customers' needs and wants
- Establishes relationships with the customers from acquisition to retention
- Considers and addresses the entire customer experience through feedback
- Creates and participates in advertising, promotion and publicity
- Fuels innovation and helps set a product apart from its competition
- Engages with all functions across an organization from sales and product to legal to finance

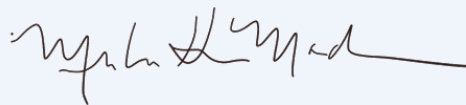


**AccuWeather**

As a marketer, you will present your ideas and insights every day to individuals from not only business disciplines – from accounting and finance to supply chain and management – but also to professionals in other fields – science, medicine, engineering, agriculture, government, and beyond.

I have been fortunate to have a marketing career across multiple industries from media to, entertainment to eCommerce. Each role was unique and offered the opportunity for creativity, collaboration, and storytelling which I often refer to as problem-solving with limited resources! It's part art and part science.

Excited to see Smeal marketing graduates embark on their own journeys as opportunities are endless for this field.



MICHELLE HARMON-MADSEN, '89

*Chief Marketing Officer*

**AccuWeather**

## Business Development & Sales

Meet alumni pursuing careers in customer- or client-facing roles in areas such as:

- Professional Selling
- Retail Buying & Merchandise Management
- Services Marketing
- New Business Development





## LEXI AVART

2011  
 Managing Director  
**Teach for America**  
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### Perspectives

#### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

I wish I knew just how transferable marketing and the skills we learn are in a multitude of different sectors. Marketing at its core is applied sociology, we need a deep understanding of our market in order to effectively communicate that we have something that can fill their needs. If I don't pitch it the way the market will respond best, we won't get our desired outcome. I used this understanding to guide my work teaching kindergarteners, developing non-profit programming, and now in my role supporting recruiters and applicants across the northeast.

#### Every marketing major should...

Continue to build relationships and networks on campus as best as you can in this virtual environment!

### Professional Life

#### My first job out of college

I was a 2012 Philadelphia corps member with Teach For America. I taught elementary school for 4 years in North Philadelphia, teaching 3rd grade while also supporting students with individualized education plans across grades K-5. During this time I was also a Fellow for Jewish Heritage Programs, where I created and executed a variety of community building events for young professionals in the Philadelphia area.

#### How I got to my current position

A recruiter from our national team reached out to see if I was interested in exploring a role that combined my passion for educational equality with marketing.

#### What my job entails

I am a Managing Director on Teach For America's National Recruitment Team. TFA is a national leadership development non-profit that strives to build coalitions with leaders advocating for communities in all sectors. I manage a team of recruiters across the northeast, supporting college students who are interested in pursuing an impactful career with us after graduation.

#### What I look for when recruiting

I look for someone who is motivated to make an impact, who actively seeks to build partnerships with others, and who is eager to grow. At Teach For America, we look for innovative leaders who create what they know needs to be true, even when facing systemic barriers, and those who are willing to take risks and learn from mistakes. I deeply believe that we are shaped by the experiences we chose along our career journey, and it's up to us to decide how we want to leverage our strengths.

*"Take every opportunity available to you!  
 It's so important to figure out what you like  
 and don't like so you know what type of  
 career opportunities you want to pursue  
 after graduation."*



## ADAM BROWN

**2012**

*Manager, Sports Marketing &  
Sponsorships*

**KPMG**

Montvale, New Jersey

## Professional Life

### **My first job out of college**

Graduate Assistant at Madison Square Garden

### **How I found my first job**

A fellow Penn Stater who I worked with during my time as a Penn State Athletics intern texted me one day after I graduated, saying that they had an open intern position in her department as a Marketing Associate, Sports Properties at Madison Square Garden and thought I'd be a good fit!

### **How I got to my current position**

I was hired when KPMG signed the deal to title sponsor the KPMG Women's PGA Championship, a major on the LPGA Tour. My background working on so many different events at MSG in a fast paced environment definitely stood out and ended up helping me plan the inaugural Championship!

### **Internships**

Super Bowl XLVI, Madison Square Garden, Penn State Athletics (Basketball, Baseball), MLB Network, US Soccer, New York Red Bulls

## Perspectives

### **What my job entails**

Creating memorable experiences for our clients. I manage KPMG's title sponsorship of the KPMG Women's PGA Championship, a major on the LPGA Tour, and lead our relationship with PGA TOUR brand ambassador Maverick McNealy. I also help activate our sponsorships for ambassadors Phil Mickelson, Stacy Lewis, and Mariah Stackhouse.

### **What I look for when recruiting**

Work ethic, attitude, ambition, attention to detail, willingness to learn... all things you can't teach! Don't just say you have these traits, show me! Also, the ability to relate your past experiences to the job you are applying for. Prove why you will succeed in this new role.

### **Advice for current marketing majors**

Get involved and get involved with a purpose. Penn State is huge and offers so many opportunities, take advantage of it. Don't just join THON or a club, join with the purpose of one day getting a leadership position. Once you get there, try to find correlations in what you're doing and what you want to do in your career. Drawing those parallels on your resume, and in interviews, is what will set you apart. Related specifically to working in sports, someone once told me that if you don't get involved with your athletic department in school, especially such a prominent one like Penn State which operates essentially like a professional team, you better have a good reason to explain why you didn't get involved.





## EMILY BUTLER

2012  
Buyer

**TJX Companies**  
Boston, Massachusetts

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I buy men's apparel for TJ Maxx and Marshalls—strategize & forecast sales, trend shop, negotiate with market.

### How I found my first job

Interning the summer after junior year

### My first job out of college

Executive Team Leader for Target stores

### How I got to my current position

Applied for an allocation analyst position with TJX and worked my way up to buyer after 5 years in planning.

### Minor

Psychology



## Perspectives

### Memorable or helpful marketing courses

Advertising—I still use the Barnyard grid in my current position!

### Being a marketing major was...

Good preparation for working in business, especially in creative fields.

### Every marketing major should...

Learn about various types of careers within the field before settling on one path.

### Advice for current marketing majors

Begin networking now with your peers, professors, and employers. Update LinkedIn and clean up or privatize your social media accounts.

### What I look for when recruiting

Hardworking attitude, curious mind, and willingness to learn and receive feedback.

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

Many different career avenues to pursue with a marketing degree, does not just have to be sales .

*“Be open to new experiences and know that your first job may not be your dream job, but will help you learn and build a foundation for the career you do want.”*



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## KAREN T. CLAY

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**1994**

*Vice President of Global Learning and  
Development (CLO)*

**Johnson Controls International**  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### **What my job entails**

Lead the team that develops learning programs for Johnson Controls employees, partners and customers.

### **How I found my first job**

Networking!

### **My first job out of college**

Marketing Manager for a learning consulting company

### **How I got to my current position**

I was promoted internally after consolidating learning function.

### **What I look for when recruiting**

People who are comfortable telling me a story about their experiences.

### **Advice for current marketing majors**

Learn the analytics platforms and how to create a marketing strategy.





## BRIANA EDOUARD

2014

Senior Specialist, Oncology Marketing

**Merck**

North Wales, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

Lung cancer patients. I have three overarching responsibilities which include field execution, brand-communications, and promotional review. Some of my accomplishments in this role are:

- Managed and led Promotional Review Team (PRT) process from a Pan Franchise capacity to collaborate with extended stakeholders
- Increased engagement with field salesforce via teleconferences, bulletins, and various communication channels
- Composed Monthly Lung Newsletter to provide field updates on all lung related matters
- Developed and led the KEYTRUDA 5 year anniversary resource
- Executed and managed national sales meeting to engage and strengthen partnership with field sales force
- Responsible for management of lung budget across multiple work streams
- Coordinated the development of effective strategies and launch plans to incorporate the approvals to extended team members and stakeholders

## Perspectives

### How I got to my current position

I was at a point in my career where I was looking for a solidified organization where I could grow my career in marketing. The roles and experiences I had thus far were great stepping stones and I knew I wanted to work somewhere I saw myself long term. I enjoyed marketing and I knew I wanted to help people. I saw a Merck commercial on TV and started to research the company. Merck's values and opportunities aligned with where I wanted to grow. I applied to several open marketing roles and was fortunate to land a position.

### Internships

MegaWatt Communications—Poconos, PA

Surge Business Development—State College, PA

Johnson and Johnson Consumer Products—Los Angeles, CA

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

Marketing is not linear and there is a quantitative skillset that is needed. Many marketing ideas are developed from market research first to ensure appropriate segmentation, targeting, forecasting, and execution. Data/business analytics and market research courses are helpful to take if your schedule permits.

*“Say yes to opportunities. It can be a challenge to land an internship with a big company, however don't let that discourage you to apply to smaller companies. Experience has value and can grow into larger opportunities.”*



## MIKE EL-SALEH

2012

Vice President of Sales

**HomeAdvisor**

Denver, Colorado

## Perspectives

### Extracurriculars and leadership roles

I was a member of the varsity fencing team. While I had the honor of competing for Penn State, I was also very involved with SAAB (the Student Athlete Advisory Board). I held various roles and eventually was president my senior year. I had the pleasure of being a Nittany Lion mascot from 2011-2012. I was also a proud member of Pamis Nous!

### Advice for current marketing majors

I'll give you the advice I got from my commencement speaker which has always stuck with me. He said, "In business, do not underestimate the power of asking good questions." When you ask good questions, it shows a level of intellect and shows the person you're asking that you are interested in what they have to say!

## Professional Life

### How I got my current position

Moved my way from an entry level sales role to trainer, sales director, general manager, and now VP. I think there are a couple things that led to my success:

1. Do the Job Vs. Wanting The Job- Often there are people that want a role. They wait for the position to open up and then BOOM suddenly they're working hard and knocking on leadership's door. Then there are others, that already start *doing the job*. I wanted to be a trainer as a sales rep. So I made myself the go to sales rep for new hires. I would lead trainings. I wanted to be a GM/VP, I worked as a director to develop managers and turn them into directors. When you DO the job especially when one isn't available, it's what either creates the position or makes it an easy choice when interviewing.
2. I was willing to work harder than everyone else. I would stay later, I would come in earlier, and I hated being 2<sup>nd</sup> in anything! If you and I get on a treadmill, you're either getting off first or I will die on this treadmill!

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

Pay attention. As someone who has worked in the business world for some time, I wish I appreciated what I was learning more instead of focusing on passing the tests. What you're learning is going to make your job easier and make you better!

### What I look for when recruiting

Give me the hardest working person and I'll turn them into a terrific sales rep. Talent only takes you so far. I also look for a reliant professional that trusts the process and is obsessed with growing.

*"Take full advantage of your time at Penn State. There are so many great organizations, clubs, and initiatives to get involved in. It was what made my experience incredible!"*



## CAROLINE FITZGERALD

**2012**

*Vice President of Partnerships & Runner  
Experience*

**P3R**

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

## Perspectives

### **One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...**

How important it is to ground marketing decisions in analytics and customer insights. The best marketers are able to use consumer insights to fuel creative innovation. Being strong in marketing analytics and being able to back up your recommendations and ideas with data is essential to being a successful marketer.

### **Advice for current marketing majors**

I would encourage you to think about your job search and career as a journey, instead of putting pressure on yourself to land your “dream job.”

## Professional Life

### **What my job entails**

At P3R (Pittsburgh Three Rivers Marathon), I am responsible for generating all non-registration revenue for the DICK’S Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon and all of our running events through brand partnerships, corporate sponsorships, and merchandise sales.

### **My first job out of college**

I started my career with Kohl’s right after graduating in their Manager in Training program. This program gave me the knowledge and skills necessary to be a leader of a major department store. After completing the MIT program, I held two progressive management roles in two different locations in the Greater Pittsburgh Area. I oversaw businesses for Kohl’s that amounted to 12 million dollars in sales annually, while leading direct reports and a team of over 100+ associates. These roles honed my leadership skills and gave me an advanced level of experience very early in my career.

### **How I got to my current position**

My first job at Kohl’s in store management ultimately led to me moving to Wisconsin to work in the Kohl’s marketing department at their corporate headquarters. After a few years in Wisconsin, I took an opportunity to move back home to Pittsburgh, PA and work as the Director of Public Programs at the Smithsonian-Affiliated Heinz History Center. In this role, I was responsible for planning large-scale events to drive museum visitation and admissions revenue. As a life-long athlete though, I’ve always been interested in having a career in sports, and through networking and volunteering, eventually I was fortunate enough to begin working for P3R, the organization behind the DICK’S Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon and all of Pittsburgh’s major running events & races.

*“The four years of rigorous marketing classes at Smeal prepared me to be a marketing leader in multiple industries.”*



## CARLY HARRIS

**2016**

*Account Executive, Business Development  
Manager*

**Johannes Leonardo**

New York, New York

## Perspectives

### Internships

Little Black Bag, Copywriting Intern; Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site and Museum, Marketing and Public Relations Intern; MRY, Client Services Intern

### Advice for current marketing majors

Go into networking with an open-mind and curiosity. Ask questions, figure out what actually interests you and what does not. Expand your network outside what you think you *should* be doing, and don't be afraid to explore.

### Memorable or helpful marketing courses

MKTG 301 with Professor Jennifer Coupland.

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I work for a full-service creative advertising agency. You want to ensure that whatever work you are putting forward (either client or consumer-facing) is consistent, on brand, on brief, and is compelling. My actual day to day consists of people management (both clients and internal teams), strategic and creative thinking, problem solving, relationship-building, sales, and more. I'll wear twelve different hats in a day, and that's what keeps the day-to-day exciting.

### My first job out of college

Client Services Coordinator with Sizmek—an advertising technology firm.

### How I got to my current position

A mentor of mine did a fellowship with WPP, had a wide network from that program, and knew someone who was hiring an Assistant Account Executive at JL. I interviewed and bang, boom, 3 weeks later I was starting a new job after Blue and White Weekend 2017!

### What I look for when recruiting

Enthusiasm, ambition, and group-management skills. Advertising is a team sport- we get to great work together.

### How I found my first job

A Penn State alumnus from the company I interned with referred me.

*“Every marketing major should take a sales course, even if you don't intend to go directly into sales! It will be more helpful than you realize.”*



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## CHRISTINA KEHOE

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**2014**

*Manager, Partnership Marketing*

**National Hockey League**

New York, NY

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

Managing seven partners of the National Hockey League, helping them leverage their sponsorship of the NHL to achieve their business objectives and build brand equity with our fans.

### My first job out of college

I found my first job and my current job in the same way: networking! For my first job out of college, I worked on the agency side at Team Epic, a sports and entertainment marketing agency, managing sports & entertainment partnerships on behalf of my clients. My connections to my current job came through a colleague I met at Team Epic and also a friend from Penn State. The industry is small so connections are abundant.

### Internships

Game Day Intern, Hudson Valley Renegades; Game Day Operations Intern, Penn State Athletics

*“Keep your goals in mind but be open to opportunities that you may be unfamiliar with.”*



## PETER KISSINGER

2019

*Customer Development Associate*

**Johnson & Johnson**

Greater Philadelphia Area, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

Sales analytics, sales strategy communication, and facilitation of new product launch plans for Johnson & Johnson personal health care brands. Brand teams I work across are: *Tylenol, Motrin, Band-Aid, Neosporin, Zyrtec, Benadryl, Pepcid, Imodium, Lactaid.*

### How I got to my current position

A relentless pursuit of connecting with leaders in my organization who began their careers on a similar path, allowing my intellectual curiosity and genuine ambition to guide my career moves!

### My first job out of college

Johnson & Johnson Sales Leadership Development Program

### How I found my first job

Throughout my 6-month co-op with J&J in 2018 I made it a point to network with all former Penn Staters at J&J to soak up advice on career acceleration. When final round interviews came around for a full-time role with the company, I had a substantial amount of Career Advocates who vouched for my skills and leadership capabilities.

## Perspectives

### Internships

Sales & Operations Intern for Textron Aviation;  
Johnson & Johnson Customer Development Co-op

### Being a marketing major was...

Influential in shaping my career aspirations, while enhancing my understanding of the unique universes that fall within the broader umbrella which we all defined as marketing.

### Every marketing major should...

Enroll in at least 3 unique marketing courses that touch the different sectors within the department such as: strategic brand management, digital marketing, marketing analytics, or retail marketing to name a few!

### What I look for when recruiting

Contagious energy, passion rooted in purpose, ambition, intellectual curiosity. "All hands-on-deck" work mentality and participation in philanthropic endeavors also are high on my list.

***"Become your 'OWN CHAMPION':  
take control of your personal and  
professional development outside of  
the classroom that allows you to gain  
perspective on your passions and  
where you see yourself post-  
graduation!"***





## BOBBY MCCONNELL

2011

Sales Manager

**Amazon (Advertising)**

New York, New York

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

Amazon Advertising leverages Amazon's world-class personalization technologies to drive new business and grow existing partnerships across multiple platforms to large brand and performance advertisers. I am a Manager of Associate Account Executive's within Amazon Advertising. I manage Amazon Advertising's junior sales talent. This entails everything from planning a six-month curriculum to explaining and teaching their job functions to mentoring them on how to best maximize their talent. I also spend time in partnership with our recruiters to drive our university sourcing efforts.

### How did I get my current position?

Amazon reached out on LinkedIn. I cannot stress enough how important it is to keep an up to date and informational LinkedIn profile. I also make an effort to respond to the recruiters that reach out because while I may not be interested in the current position they have open, I never know when they may change companies or when the roles they have available may change.

## Perspectives

### Every marketing major should...

Bring a one sheet along with your resume to your interviews. The one sheet should be an executive summary of a larger project you have worked on at Penn State/in an internship, etc. This one sheet should explain the task at hand, your role in the project, what actions you took to help drive the success, and what the end result was (measurable numbers are the best, even if an estimate). When you get interview questions where you would draw upon that experience anyways, you can provide the one sheet to the interviewer and walk them through the experience. It's impressive AND you can reference it as written notes to say everything you want to about the experience.

### Advice to Undergrads

Think about tasks you enjoy rather than targeting one specific industry or job title. There are so many jobs out there with different titles and chances are you will move around early in your career. Be open to different roles.

*“Think about the tasks you enjoy rather than targeting one specific industry or job title. There are so many jobs out there with different titles and chances are you will move around early in your career. Be open to different roles.”*



## KATE MCGRATH

2019

Senior Associate, New Business

**Digitas Health**

Philadelphia Area, Pennsylvania

## Perspectives

### Internships

Account Management Intern, Razorfish Health (organized by Publicis Health); New Business Intern, Digitas Health (organized by Publicis Health)

*“I owe so much to the Smeal Marketing Department and their support in my personal and professional growth. I took more of an untraditional path within Smeal, but Professor Coupland, Professor Winterich, Professor Slot and more really helped me hone my skillset and find the right opportunities (whether they know it or not!).”*

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

Within the Digitas Health Growth team, I work with senior and executive leadership to develop and manage new business opportunities such as pitches and capabilities presentations while overseeing agency marketing content (internal communications, social channels and website and public relations).

### How I got to my current position

After learning the foundations of my department and role, I worked with my manager to expand responsibilities in a way that both contributed to my growth and exposure with senior leadership. This meant I raised my hand for more opportunities outside of my primary content marketing role such as salesforce, business development, pitch management and leaned into corporate and business resource group programming.

### Being a marketing major was...

The best decision—the department supported my interests and I met my best friend in the major!

### Memorable or helpful marketing courses

MKTG 497—Prime class because it’s applicability to the real world and closely curated to interests of students to get the most out of the experience.

MKTG 301—I remember sitting in Prof. Coupland’s 301 class sophomore year and knowing this is exactly what I wanted to do. From there, I leaned into more marketing opportunities such as leads in MGMT 496, my capstone, and Prime.

MKTG 445—Prof. Winterich trusted us to make adult decisions and have conversations that were rarely talked about as we prepared to graduate in the spring. Not only did it further my marketing discipline especially because I deal with many global clients and accounts now, it was such a fun course to take.

### Minor

Digital Media Trends and Analytics



## LAUREN MOSES

2017  
Deal Desk Analyst  
**Oracle**  
Austin, Texas

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I work with our field organization on large, complicated deals to assist in advancing them through complex internal processes, impacting revenue directly. I assist with our back-end processes and internal systems, collaborating with many different groups such as our approvers, revenue accounting, business practice, and booking.

### My first job out of college

My first job out of college was a business development consultant with Oracle, where I moved to a direct sales role afterwards and then to the role I'm in now.

### How I found my first job

I heard about my first job at Oracle through someone in one of my marketing classes who had mentioned he got a job there following college. Upon further review of the job and requirements, I applied through their website and was connected with a recruiter for Oracle that worked with Penn State applicants.

### Internships

Frito Lay at Penn State

## Perspectives

### Being a marketing major was...

A great way to learn about the different facets of marketing and the large application that knowledge has carried through to my life. Even though my current job is not directly related to marketing, I gained a lot of skills on how to market myself which has helped immensely in my career out of college.

### One thing I wish I would have known when I was a marketing major...

Talk to your professors if you don't know what area of marketing is for you! There are a ton of courses to take that can cater to your interests.

### Memorable or helpful marketing classes

I loved all of my marketing courses and professors, but some classes top of my mind that I enjoyed were MKTG 497, MKTG 330, and MKTG 422.

### Advice for current marketing majors

Don't be afraid if your job straight out of college is not directly in marketing. Most companies will have roles you can move into in marketing after an entry level role.

*"I enjoyed my time at Smeal immensely! Working in the research lab was one of the best things I did while at school - I got a ton of exposure into what marketing researchers are doing/researching and it was a one of a kind experience. Highly recommend looking into it if there are openings!"*



## JILL PATTERSON

1999

*Director of Customer Success*

**PandoLogic**

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

## Perspectives

### What I look for when recruiting

When I am recruiting new hires or interviewing candidates, I look for potential and agility; more specifically – I will often surprise a candidate with a call to catch them in an authentic environment. Scripted responses in an interview are often easy to detect, but the work world is ever changing – and therefore the ability to have vision that adjusts is a necessary trait for any position. I will never dismiss experience – but – processes across organizations change constantly, it's what you do when no one is looking that matters more – especially in marketing and client success roles.

### Every marketing major should...

Network, Network, Network – when you are a student – you can be a student and still network.

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

PandoLogic enables talent acquisition organizations to source quality applicants faster and more efficiently through the use of big data, artificial intelligence and proprietary campaign algorithms that fully-automate and optimize the job advertising process across diverse job distribution channels.

As the Director of Customer Success, I collaborate with key leaders across our sales, ad operations, network partnerships, engineering and algorithm teams to elevate the customer experience, drive accountability and transparency on service delivery, and position PandoLogic as a partner obsessed with shared and successful achievement of business results. In my role, I manage a talented group of customer success managers who are dedicated to high volume customer accounts. In 2020 – our team successfully worked with our client partners to hire over 1 million essential employees.

### How I found my first job

I actually worked 30+ hours each week while at Penn State for a company called MBNA, now Bank of America. It was in this position that I learned work ethic, time management and personal/professional life balance.

### My first job out of college

After my time at MBNA, I followed a college roommate to Harrisburg to work for Bell Atlantic Yellow Pages – that's right – we sold ads in the phonebook and eventually started to move those ads "online" for digital viewing. During my tenure, GTE Corporation and Bell Atlantic merged to form Verizon Communications.

### How I got to my current position

As someone who has worked in marketing and advertising for more than 20 years, I know the power of branding and positioning for companies, products and people. Through networking – and (luck of) timing – the door to my current position was opened at an event in San Antonio Texas where a 15-minute meeting with the CEO would turn into a sale for my current job – and an interview process last year during his company's expansion efforts.



## SARAH REAGAN

2018

Assistant Buyer

**Dick's Sporting Goods**

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

As an Assistant Buyer I manage vendor relationships, build out marketing, merchandising, and buy plans. My job has been a really fascinating study in consumer behavior as my categories are truly driven by impulse in stores. We strategically select items to craft an overall assortment that will increase the units per transaction, and drive top line sales growth with add on items.

### How I found my first job

I attended the Mega Fair as a junior and hit it off with the DICK's recruiter who, after speaking about my extracurricular activities and engagement, I mentioned my favorite band and it happened to be the recruiters favorite as well.

### How I got to my current position

Upon the completion of my rotational program, I requested a buying position based on my experience in Licensed. I was placed in a full time role with the front end team and have been in this role for just over a year.

## Perspectives

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

- Smeal Student Mentors | Member (2015) | Team Leader (2016) | President (2017)
- Smeal Alumni Mentorship Program (2016-2018)
- Management 496 Consulting Practicum Teaching Assistant (2016-2018)
- THON Committee Member (2014-2018) & THON Dancer 2017
- Gamma Sigma Sigma Service Sorority (2015-2018)
- Leadershape Institute (2016)

### What I look for when recruiting

Extracurricular involvement and excitement. Applying what you learn in the classroom through engaged scholarship is so important and shows recruiters that you can think critically and creatively solve problems by applying what you have learned in the classroom.

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### My first job out of college

I started my career at Dick's Sporting Goods in the merchandising rotational program. This was such a great experience as I was able to work in stores to understand the impact of corporate decisions at a store level. I also completed a rotation in Licensed products in which I was able to build out an assortment for each Minor League Baseball team. Throughout my rotations I was able to try new things and really lean into what career path was right for me.

*“The transition to adulthood can be very difficult for any number of reasons and can feel like starting over again. I have found that a good book, a long run, and some sunshine can make everything feel a little more manageable.”*



## ABBEY TUTTLE

2019

Marketing Business Partner

**Textron Systems**

Boston, Massachusetts

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I work with the executive leadership team and analyze industry trends to plan and execute marketing business objectives and manage brand development, product strategy, and market implementation for the Weaponry, Geospatial Solutions, Electronic Systems and Airborne Tactical Advantage businesses.

### How I found my first job

PSU Career Fair!

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

The opportunities in a marketing career are endless. Don't be discouraged if you don't land your dream job right after college; it's important to keep an open mind to all opportunities as you will learn something valuable from every experience!

## Perspectives

### Memorable or helpful marketing courses

- Penn State Prime Practicum (MKTG 497)
- Advertising and Promotions Management (MKTG 422)
- Consumer Behavior (MKTG 330)

### Internships

- Textron Systems, Aetna

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

- Alpha Kappa Psi Professional Business Fraternity
- Penn State Marketing Association
- Penn State Prime

**TEXTRON** Systems

HOWE X HOWE

**LYCOMING**

**ATAC**  
A Textron Company

*“Learning doesn’t end in the classroom. Build your network and immerse yourself in new experiences by getting involved in marketing organizations, taking on leadership roles, attending guest speaker presentations, and staying up to date on industry news. Take advantage of all the resources that Penn State and Smeal have to offer, meet as many people as you can and most importantly, have fun!”*

# Strategic Insights & Analytics

Meet alumni focused on careers that involve strategic marketing decision making in areas such as:

- Brand & Product Management
- Marketing Analyst
- Integrated Marketing Communications
- Sports Marketing





## ROCKY COLLINS

2014

Founder & CEO

**CALI HNDSTME Skincare**

Los Angeles, California

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I currently oversee all creative, operations, and strategy for men's skincare brand CALI HNDSTME that I founded a year ago. We now have a distribution deal with Express.com and have won a 2020 Men's Grooming Award (via AskMen.com). With that – I do hire/work with many different types of professionals who are all experts in their particular area. It can be hectic being a CEO of a new company, but it's an adventure that I love!

### How I got my current position

I had a dream job working at American Eagle Outfitters' design center in Manhattan, NY but creatively there were things pulling me toward the west coast. Once landing in Los Angeles I eventually found my way back into fashion and retail working at the headquarters of Vince, L'Oréal, and Guess Inc. While at L'Oréal I really found myself obsessed with the skincare market and I found numerous ways in which it was underserved. I've also always personally been a huge advocate and user of skincare products, often giving out advice on my social media platforms with many requests. Once I left L'Oréal to ensure there wouldn't be any conflict of interests, I began the journey of developing my own line (which recently won a 2020 Men's Grooming Award).

## Perspectives

### What I look for when recruiting

Someone who has demonstrated the ability to do the task at hand. That can be via a direct comparable role or even just a passion project. I like when someone can show that they really understand what it is that their task is. Also, it's important that they also love it. People perform better when there's a passion involved.

*“Find what it is that you truly enjoy doing and go find a way to pursue that. It can be as simple as working in sports, or finding a certain area of expertise that they find fascinating. And by all means—try as many things as possible until you figure it out!”*

### Advice for current marketing majors

Pursue as many passions as you can until you find what rings most true to you. The world is going digital now, so don't be afraid of reaching out to places and people that you never thought you had access to.

### Additional major

My primary major was marketing, however, I earned a second Bachelor's degree in public relations via the College of Communications.

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

Numbers rule. No matter the creative, everything ties back to numbers and return on investment. I would have paid more attention to those excel classes.





## NAKEIA DRUMMOND

2004  
CEO

**NLD Strategic**

Baltimore, Maryland

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

We're management consultants supporting all-sizes of public sector and private entities that work towards equity in education, community development, public health and economic inclusion. We work with leaders nationally to develop a path forward and execute strategy that delivers sustainable social impact. Day-to-day, we are doing: project management, writing proposals, planning and facilitating meetings and work sessions, designing strategy for specific outcomes, business development meetings/sales.

### My first job out of college

Analyst at Accenture

### How I found my first job

Smeal College Job Fair

### What I look for when recruiting

Someone who's coachable but who also can see a different way of doing things and who's not afraid to try and fail versus waiting for perfect instruction to just plug into.

## Perspectives

### Being a marketing major was...

Not what I expected. I think most people hear marketing and they think of all the cool outputs that it produces or contributes to. But, when studying it, the science and analytics involved far outweigh the creative masterminding I expected. But, I did enjoy it, from what I remember. And, I learned a lot about how to use data to make decisions.

### Internships

Hershey Foods—Sales & Merchandising

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

Black Caucus

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

INTERN, INTERN, INTERN. There weren't as many jobs back then for undergraduates with marketing degrees who hadn't already been an intern at a company. I never ended up working in the field of marketing because the opportunities would have been more like internships in both responsibility and pay. I needed to make a living after college. However, the psychology of marketing, I have applied over and over again in my career. I didn't realize how much I'd use it every day.

*“Every marketing major should network and understand the different paths for marketing. Decide what you like and don't like. Don't force yourself where you don't fit. There's a place for you.”*



## ASHLYNN EIDEMILLER

2014

Product Director

**Genomind**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### How I found my first job

I went to career fairs early even without a lot of experience. I talked to a lot of employers and got a sense for what I was passionate about and what they were looking for. It's important to go when the stakes are lower to help ease the career fair jitters. I got some really good advice from an employer and spent my sophomore year tapping into the resources Smeal had to offer. I went to the career center to develop my resume, talked to my counselor about my goals and classes, I attended mock career fairs and more. I also tried to pick organizations that were more professionally focused like my business fraternity (Delta Sigma Pi). I met my closest friends, gained leadership experience and to this day I have a lifetime network of mentors. I went back to the career fair that next year and the same employer that gave me the great advice, hired me for my first internship.

### How I got my current position

I got to a point in my career where I knew I was ready for more responsibility and I was looking for new challenges to help me grow. I happened to be contacted by a head hunter on LinkedIn for a startup mental health company called Genomind. I can't express how important it is to maintain your LinkedIn. I knew that I felt a deeper sense of purpose within healthcare than I did in other industries and I wanted an opportunity to scratch my entrepreneurial itch. I was very fortunate to have this opportunity and I am incredibly excited for what will come next!

## Perspectives

### Being a marketing major was...

Way more comprehensive than I thought it was going to be. I think some people have a preconceived notion that marketing is not as 'challenging' as other business roles...just for creative people...or that you can't make a competitive salary. I am happy to report that all these rumors were false. In fact, 1 in 5 CEOs have some form of marketing background. This is one of the few career tracks that require you to be a jack of all trades...a utility player. For people who like diversity within a role, shaping strategy, being a key decision maker and flexing your ability to collaborate and lead across different departments, this might be the place for you.

### Advice for current marketing majors

You don't need to know exactly what you want to do with your life, but don't wait until your junior year to start putting the pieces together. Get some experience, talk to people with different types of positions you might be interested in, and take advantage of Smeal while you have it at your fingertips.

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

Delta Sigma Pi (Overall THON Chair & VP of Professional Activities), THON Committee (Special Events), Students Consulting for Non Profit Organizations, Smeal Marketing Research Department.

*"Pay attention to other business courses and stretch yourself to try other majors, classes or internships that are outside of your marketing comfort zone because you will need it."*



## HALIE ELLIS

2016

Managing Consultant

**IBM**

New York, New York

## Perspectives

### How I got to my current position

I have been with IBM for 4.5 years and have enjoyed the dynamic atmosphere of experiencing multiple different work environments through my client projects. I have found my niche in marketing and payment transformation projects and continue to seek out client opportunities with such contracts.

### Internships

IBM Consulting Degrees Program; Smeal Career and Corporate Connections Office

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

PSMA Vice President of Professional Development; Smeal Mentoring Program Student Liaison

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I manage a technical project team to gather business and technical requirements to build an Alerts Platform for a large national bank. As a consultant, I have the opportunity to work with many financial service companies in the banking and insurance industries. A few project highlights I have worked on are traveling to Arizona to facilitate a large marketing transformation project within a technology organization. I also spent months in Pittsburgh working on migrating a legacy Alerts platform to New Tech.

### How I found my first job

Network, network, network! Smeal gives you all of the resources to be successful. I joined the Smeal Mentoring Program my junior year and my mentor worked at IBM, she was able to refer me to an internship position at IBM in financial service consulting. The Smeal Mentoring Program is a phenomenal opportunity to connect with Alumni and help you navigate the workforce to find a job!

*“Do not feel siloed when job searching for only marketing related fields, marketing is an easily transferrable skillset in the financial services industry or any other industry for that matter.”*

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

Take more sales classes and internships are IMPORTANT! Take every opportunity Smeal has to offer, it will only help you down the road. If it weren't for my Smeal internship, I don't think I would be presented in this bio book, nor at IBM.

### What I look for when recruiting

Problem solving and forward thinkers who can read between the lines of solving a client's problem.

### Every marketing major should...

Take classes in finance—it will only help you when you enter the real world marketing fields



## SAMANTHA EVANS

2018

Marketing Specialist

**Temple University**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### Perspectives

#### Memorable or helpful marketing courses

Penn State Prime! This club gave me the opportunity to apply for the spring branding practicum class. Easily the most helpful and exciting course in my time at Penn State. The class is hands-on, “real-life” work experience, and gave me the opportunity to learn about and engage with the world of branding.

*“Take advantage of all the marketing classes that are offered. Each class offers different skills needed to be successful in a marketing role. Also, take advantage of the Penn State alumni base. We are everywhere and everyone is more than willing to chat with you to help you out!”*

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

In my current role, I’m a jack of all trades. My role entails managing Temple’s sponsorships and partnerships, including finding new partnerships that align with Temple’s goals. This also includes activating on-site events, once allowed again! I am also heavily involved with the Temple rebranding process. I support the branding for each school and college, and manage the relationship with our creative agency.

### How I got to my current position

When I was working at my first job out of college, I realized pretty quickly that I needed a change. There wasn’t room for growth in the company, and my role was very heavily sales based – something I knew I didn’t want to do for my career. I was missing the marketing and creative aspects in my job, and I set out to find a position that would not only better suit my goals, but also allow room for growth within the company and personally. I wanted to be challenged and excited about the work I was doing. I started applying for jobs throughout the Philly area and was very specific in what I was looking for in a role. I re-connected with people in my network and connected with new people through LinkedIn. Each person gave me advice on my job search and helped guide me as I prepared for my interviews. It took a long time, but I was patient and knew I would find a job that challenged me, excited me and allowed me to grow in my career. Eventually, I found this role at Temple and after a few rounds of interviews, I was offered the job.

### How I found my first job

I attended some sports business conferences, seminars and career fairs throughout my time at Penn State. At the time, I thought I wanted to go into the sports industry, so that’s where I focused my time. I met people from a few different sports teams, one of them being the Philadelphia Flyers. Throughout my four years at Penn State, I made sure to stay connected with my contacts so when the time came for internships and jobs, they knew my name and what I was looking for. Eventually, that led me to my first job at Comcast Spectacor, the parent company of the Flyers.



## ERIC FRANCHI

1998

Partner

**MathCapital**

New York, New York

## Perspectives

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

I think there's a view that marketing is about advertising and messaging. In reality, ads are but one part of a much larger marketing ecosystem/industry. The most sophisticated companies invest significant capital in the people, technology and systems to build a world-class marketing process to ultimately better understand their customers and products. In the 2020s marketing is more about math and science than it is art.

 MathCapital

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I am currently a partner at MathCapital, an early stage venture capital fund focused on the digital transformation of marketing and media. My job entails a) raising capital from Limited Partners (investors) -- generally high net worth individuals, family offices, foundations and other institutions; b) generating deal flow -- prospective early-stage investments for the fund; and c) conducting diligence on startups and selecting those which we believe meet our criteria for investment and d) helping our investment portfolio grow via advice, introductions to prospective investors, customers and hires, etc.

### How I found my first job

I was recruited right out of Penn State.

### My first job out of college

I entered the Macy's merchandising training program after graduating and then was selected for an assistant buyer's role in the mattress department.

### How I got to my current position

While I enjoyed my time at Macy's and learned a lot about retail, I was very interested in how the internet was transforming the world. I took a role as advertising salesperson at an early internet company and left after a year with a friend to start our own business. That then began a 20 year journey as a founder and then, after selling our business, investor.

*“Every marketing major should become a marketer themselves. There are so many tools and platforms today that allow anyone to build an online presence or business, connect to the world and learn quickly. It’s incredibly easy to get valuable experience today, versus waiting for summer internships (those are important too!)”*



## ASIA GRANT

2017

CEO & Creative Director

**Redoux NYC**

Brooklyn, New York

## Professional Life

### How I got to my current position

I left IBM to work at another consulting firm, where I became more specialized in UX research. I realized that I wanted something to call my own, so I brought up the idea of starting a side hustle to a good friend of mine that had just graduated from Penn State. We agreed in 2018 that we would start a side hustle together, and we both worked on it during hours after our corporate jobs. We launched in July 2019, and in October 2020 I quit my job to work on it full time.

### My first job out of college

At IBM, I was brought onto a specialized team that acted as a design agency within IBM and our goal was to use Design Thinking as a problem-solving methodology for our more traditional clients. Our team was made up of go-to market strategists, full stack developers, and designers. I decided to align myself to the designer track, where I learned about design thinking facilitation and UX/UI design. I learned that much of the design thinking process and UX research methodology aligned with what I was most interested in related to marketing.

## Perspectives

### What my job entails

Currently, I run a cosmetics company with a fellow PSU grad. I act as CEO and Creative Director, which entails developing visual identity/ storytelling of the brand, conducting customer interviews, and building our go to market strategy for new product releases.

### Memorable or helpful marketing classes

My most helpful marketing class was definitely Marketing Analytics with Professor Baumgartner because it showed me the technical and statistical side of marketing—making me realize that there is as much science behind marketing as creativity (if not even more so!). My most memorable class was MKTG 301 with Dr. Coupland, who ended up being my thesis advisor.

### Advice for current marketing majors

Become business proficient. A great book to reference for this is ‘Financial Intelligence’ by Joe Night, because no matter what you do, you will be part of some sort of organization or business and you need to understand how your inputs affects the output of the company. And always be kind! People may not always remember what you said or did, but they will remember how you made them feel.

### What I look for when recruiting

Grit and an openness to proactively learn.

*“I wish I knew earlier that marketing requires you to have both a data driven and creative mind. I continue to climb the learning curve for how to make better marketing decisions with qualitative and quantitative data.”*



## ANDY JAMES

2002

Vice President, Corporate Strategy

**New Pig**

Warriors Mark, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### My first job out of college

Research Analyst with Olson Zaltman, a small, cutting-edge research consultancy based out of Boston and State College. I was one of their first hires at the time, and had the privilege of working with Jerry Olson (Professor Emeritus, Penn State University) and Gerald Zaltman (Professor Emeritus, Harvard University). Could not have asked for two more thoughtful, innovative mentors.

### How I got to my current position

I left Olson Zaltman to become New Pig's first Brand Manager, a then 25 year old company with a powerful brand in Industry. I held that role for 5 years, and did everything from rebuilding the messaging and taxonomy for 4,200 products, to reworking the catalog, to helping architect in-house workflow software to control customer-facing assets and messages efficiently. From there, I spent a couple years as Sustainability Manager, which was a bit of a hybrid role I built to spend my time developing a service/consulting offering. From there, I became the Director of Advanced Experience, and then Vice President, Corporate Strategy.

## Perspectives

### What I look for when recruiting

People who aren't obstacle fixated, who are versatile and entrepreneurial, and who truly want to learn. If you're doing it "right" after college, the pace of learning only accelerates. In my opinion, don't strive to just "network"... strive to get your work and talent in front of the people who can help you find your niche.

*"I am always happy to talk or guide Penn State students however I can. Lean on your Alums... 'We Are!' doesn't end in Beaver Stadium."*

### Every marketing major should...

Understand analytics and what they actually are telling you in any given case... and understand when you need to build your own analytics and measures. It's never as easy as looking at a single number and knowing if an effort worked or paid off. If you can play equally as well on the quantitative/hard and qualitative/soft side of marketing, you'll do well. Having that combination is rare.

### One thing I wish I would have known when I was a marketing major...

How much the statistical and analytical view would come into play in the years following. Ironically, to make the most out of my marketing major, knowing what I know now, I would have taken additional finance and stat courses. You can always pick up a course via World Campus, which is wonderful.



## BAILEY JOHNSON

2017

Senior Media Planner

**Razorfish**

New York, New York

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I strategically plan, manage, and optimize \$70M+ each quarter for my client's media advertising campaigns. Every campaign has specific branding, conversion (ROI), and social media goals that I need to plan for across approximately 15 media publishers. These publishers include companies like Google, Facebook, The New York Times, NPR Podcasts, Amazon, the Skimm, The Wall Street Journal and many more. I also get to work cross functionally with my creative agency teammates and data science teammates, which is one of my favorite things about my job! Flexing my strategic, creative, and analytical muscles to drive success on my client's campaign is a lot of fun, and so rewarding!

### How I found my first job

I traveled to New York to attend the Communication College's Success in the City career fair in order to find my first job as an Assistant Media Planner. This fair also allows Smeal students to attend, if you find your own transportation, and it is usually hosted in April. I highly recommend talking to someone administrative within the Communications College to sign up for this event, if you are interested in an agency job or internship.

## Perspectives

### Favorite Penn State accomplishment

Founding Penn State Prime and becoming the teaching assistant for the course taught by Professor Coupland. The idea to start the hybrid organization/course was kickstarted by my eagerness to learn as much as I could about both brand marketing and advertising in my four years at PSU. I wanted every marketing student to have the opportunity to connect with professionals weekly, think through corporate level problems, and walk out of Smeal with emotional intelligence to command a meeting room and real-world experience in their back pocket. Marketing is a career that is always evolving, and that is why it's so valuable for students to keep their finger on the pulse of the dynamic industry with hands on projects lead by top subject matter experts.

### What I look for when recruiting

Someone who can showcase their curiosity to me in an interview. I want to see their wheels churning and chat through some awesome questions that they proactively brought to the interview! Anyone can be trained for an entry level job and do it well, but I want someone on my team who comes prepared and who is a quick thinker!

### Every marketing major should...

Consider doing a minor that will help you prepare for your dream job. Having knowledge in the area you want to pursue will give you credibility on your resume and speaking points during interviews.

*“Get to know your professors! Consider visiting office hours, even if you aren't having issues with an assignment, to really leverage your Smeal network!”*





## MEGAN LEEN

2014

Senior Product Manager of Delta Co-Brand Cards

**American Express**

New York, New York

## Perspectives

### What I look for when recruiting

A candidate who has made the most of their time in college with well-rounded experience and equally as important, someone who is eager and has done their research on the company and position. Passion and drive is so important, especially when not everyone is fortunate to get directly applicable experience prior to graduation.

### Being a marketing major was...

A great introduction to what it takes to create and market successful products. I also liked having a foundation on all of the other business courses Smeal offered.

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I oversee customer experience of our products, our servicing strategy, and manage the communication strategy behind how we explain the product benefits to our customers. I'm also responsible for reviewing customer feedback and identifying ways to better our product and strengthen our relationship with our customers. I partner very closely with Delta on all of our initiatives, as well as numerous internal partners, including marketing, risk, finance, legal, compliance, and tech. One of our biggest projects in 2020 involved refreshing the benefits and design of our 7 Delta Cards. We've also launched additional offers to address how our customers' travel behaviors and spending has changed due to the current environment.

### How I got to my current position

After working in advertising for four years, I really wanted to get into product management, to get to the heart of how to best serve customer needs and develop leading products. I knew I wanted to go client side and was interested in working at a major financial company, so throughout my four years in advertising, I worked on various digital campaigns for JPMorgan Chase and took on additional projects that strengthened skills that could best translate to a product management role. My knowledge of financial services, staying up to date on the latest company/competitive news, and being able to explain my transferable skills helped me land my current role at American Express.

### My first job out of college

When I graduated college, I started as a digital media buyer at an ad agency.

### How I found my first job

I found my first job after attending the Penn State Communication School's career fair, Success in the City, in NYC. It was a fantastic way to network with the top publishing and ad agencies in the city and I knew I wanted to relocate to New York after graduation.

*"It is so important to take advantage of every networking opportunity, as well as to think strategically about researching companies based on the city you want to live in."*



## FRANK MACINSKY

2009

Director of Product Marketing—Messaging

**Workiva**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

Honestly, I think I have one of the coolest marketing jobs there is. As a “Marketing Principal” I help connect teams across the entire Marketing mix - product marketing, demand generation, content, creative, sales enablement, and subject matter experts to help make sure we’re attacking the market effectively with impactful messaging and tactics. Each day, I get to work on a variety of projects that directly contribute to revenue, while pushing the envelope on the new things that can help our company build a foundation for long term growth.

### My first job out of college

Business Development Associate at a boutique advertising agency in Pittsburgh.

### How I found my first job

2009 was a particularly tough time to graduate and find full-time employment. I found my first job by tapping into my network of recent Penn State grads, making personal connections, asking questions, and being a little patient.

## Perspectives

### Every marketing major should...

Take one or two really difficult courses in another business field (400 level supply chain or finance) and take one or two really difficult courses in another college (300 level history, astrophysics, etc.) Do valuable things outside the classroom.

### Being a marketing major was...

Such a great fit for me. Marketing rewards the ability to think broadly and deeply depending on the situation. Learning how to find that balance has made my career such a rewarding journey.

### Internships

Marketing Intern, Penn State Basketball (2007-2008); Accounting & Accounts Receivable Intern, Healthcare Staffing (2008)

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing...

Marketing is a discipline that evolves quickly and ferociously. Build a solid foundation in the principles that don’t (or rarely) change and learn how to spot and immerse yourself in trends while weeding out fads. Buckle up and embrace life-long learning.

*“Do stuff. Start a small business one summer and see how it goes. Design your own website. Volunteer somewhere and do market research for a non-profit or a small business. Fail at something and learn from it. Fail again. The more real life experience you can add to your classroom knowledge, the better.”*



## CHRISTINA MAHALLY

2008

North America Marketing Director

**Dow**

Marietta, Georgia

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

As the North America Polyurethanes & CAV Marketing Director, I am responsible for driving marketing strategy and excellence across NA. This includes prioritization of innovation activities, marketing best practices and education, market plan development, and optimizing market participation. As part of this role, I sit on our business leadership team as well as Dow's Marketing Leadership Team. I currently have a team comprised of strategic marketing, marketing development and sustainability managers.

### How I got to my current position

I landed my current role through sponsorship and initiative. We were going through a new org structure where marketing and sales reported up through commercial segment leaders. During that org, I noticed a general gap within the marketing team and community. As a result, I started setting up team meetings to convene the full marketing team, share best practices and structure general alignment. Two months in, I was named NA Marketing Leader and then a year later Marketing Director which added people management.

## Perspectives

### Work –life balance

I am a working mom to a 2 yr. old and a 4 yr. old. I love my job and I love my family! It took me time to learn that it's not a balance but rather a purposeful decision on where your time is spent as your life and career evolves. I have identified spaces as my husband and I got engaged, married and then started a family of where I wanted to lean in and others that I wouldn't compromise. I value working for a company who understands, respects and endorses that culture which is why I've been with Dow for 12 years. I am very passionate about the Women's Innovation Network and working moms!

### Advice to undergrads

Marketing is not just a one track career. It's rather one that can go into several different avenues—some of which can follow the advertising side, others the strategic marketing, B > C, B > B among others--which is exciting! Consider not just roles but skills you can gain through roles whether that be an internship or your first job out of school. I never thought I would have loved the B>B space as much as I have or gained such valuable experience through my time in sales.

### Why I chose marketing

I've always loved the idea of driving a strategy and utilizing an outside the box/creative approach in my every day. During college, I gravitated toward the Brand Manager Type role and initially in the B > C arena but love the B > B environment I ended up in which has included launching and managing several brands!



## DEVIN WEAKLAND MCGURGAN

**2013**

*Senior Manager of Ecommerce Sales & Merchandising*

**BIC**

Hoboken, New Jersey

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I am responsible for our ecommerce activation plan, innovation launches, marketing plan execution, content creation and deployment, new packs development, and merchandising materials across all ecommerce accounts.

### How I got to my current position

My current manager was the director of the team I worked on at a prior company. We built a strong working relationship and friendship through several projects we worked on together. When she was building her ecommerce team at BIC, she asked me to join and manage ecommerce launches and content for our entire product portfolio across our .com customer base.

### My first job out of college

I was a part of the very first Unilever Future Leaders Program in North America. This was a rotational program where I worked across functions on an accelerated learning track, including leadership exposure, formal training, professional development and an international stint in the global headquarters in London, England.

## Perspectives

### How I found my first job

I found my first job as a sales analyst in Unilever's Future Leaders Program from a Penn State Career Fair!

### Internships

I secured an internship at Altria in Richmond, VA, as a brand management intern. This experience set me up well for my career in CPG marketing as I learned the fundamentals of product brand management. I used consumer research to properly position our brands in the marketplace in order for our products to better resonate with the target audience. I then developed new product packaging designs that fit with the brands' new positioning and created a launch strategy.

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

I wish I better appreciated how much data is involved in marketing! All of the decisions we make about consumer-facing campaigns, assets, etc. are based on consumer data and market research to ensure key performance indicators are achieved.

### Additional Major

Double majored in Marketing and Journalism

*"The world of business and marketing is closely connected, so always be mindful of how you're presenting yourself and the reputation you're creating for yourself—you never know who is watching and who will come back into orbit and offer you an opportunity!"*



## BRENDON O'DONOVAN

2005

Head of Global Product Marketing

**Cision**

Austin, Texas

## Professional Life

### My first job out of college

Showroom consultant for Ferguson Enterprises. As a consultant, I was responsible for specifying materials for high-end residential new construction and remodels. After specifying, I had sales quotas to meet and would sell materials either directly to home-owners or to trade professionals (contractors, plumbers, etc.).

### How I got to my current position

I spent the first 8 years of my career in direct sales. First in residential construction, then in B2B software sales. I credit much of my success in strategic marketing with the skills, empathy and work ethic I gained working in direct sales. To transition from sales to marketing, I interviewed for a product marketing position that was primarily about sales enablement and competitive intelligence. I developed new experience that led to more responsibility through a few job and organizational changes, always in the discipline of product marketing. During the first 2 years of my marketing career, I also completed an Executive MBA with a focus in marketing which honed my quantitative and managerial disciplines. My current role I can attribute to industry knowledge, not being afraid to take on a challenge I wasn't fully qualified for, and not shying away from the jobs no one else wanted to do.

## Perspectives

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

Penn State Marketing Association was my primary student organization that I participated in. Eventually I led the Professional Development group working with companies and recruitment teams on events for our membership.

### How I found my first job

I found my first job through on campus recruiting and my involvement in the Penn State Marketing Association (PSMA). Through the club, I was able to work closely with on-campus recruiters, was invited to interview and eventually accepted an offer.

### What I look for when recruiting

I look for ability and aptitude, not just experience. I find that good marketers draw on past experiences and can articulate how past successes and failures drive their decision making today.

### Being a marketing major was...

Rewarding and fun. I genuinely enjoyed the classes, curriculum, and faculty. I found marketing fun – and it was this experience that led me to pursue a career in marketing that I still find fun and enjoyable to this day.

*“Actively seek out opportunities to expand your functional skill set in digital and data analysis: play with some coding, master Excel, learn design fundamentals, and most of all – pay attention in finance and accounting. Great marketers can tie their ideas to financial outcomes and speak fluently about the numbers. It can and will help you differentiate yourself.”*



## STEPHANIE PHILLIPS

2011

Global Learning & Development Manager

**Boston Consulting Group**

Munich, Germany

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I am part of a global initiative and change team, helping to drive change for our entire Learning and Development function. My specific role entails: supporting senior leadership on key initiatives/priorities, often collaborating with other teams to bring ideas to life; experiment with different ways we can enhance learning and development for our learners.

### How I got to my current position

Through my current company's internal job portal. I was already working there for over 2 years and knew I didn't want to leave the company but was ready for a different challenge/role. Similar to my first role out of school, I wasn't sure what exactly it was I was looking for, but interviewed for many to learn more about what all were about, eventually finding the one I knew was right fit.

### My first job out of college

I was an intern for a startup called LivingSocial. I bounced across a few different internships there, ranging from database management to sales before turning it into a full time position as an experiential marketing coordinator.

## Perspectives

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

The variety of all different types of jobs/roles possible with a marketing major. I didn't really know what all was possible both from actual marketing perspective and beyond. You can do many things with a marketing degree aside from just traditional marketing paths. I am now in learning and development, but discovered I was hired because of my marketing background, and could easily be taught L&D side.

### What I look for when recruiting

Willing and eagerness to learn, problem solving (beyond just numbers and right answer, but more the approach to solving a problem and thinking through), self-starter.

### Every marketing major should...

Try many things and learn what you like.

### Advice for current marketing majors

Learn how to also market and sell yourself. Ability to position your skills as transferable and how it is applicable/valuable to the role you're applying for goes far.

*“Life and jobs are journeys, not destinations. Your first job won't likely be your last and you really can change your path at any time. Don't forget to enjoy yourself and appreciate each step along your way for what it is, both the ups and downs.”*



## MARISSA PRESSER

2013

Managing Consultant

**IBM**

Greater Philadelphia Area, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

As a consultant, my job is completely different each day! I am typically involved in the organizational change management aspects of a technology implementation. I lead stakeholder engagement, communications and training efforts to support end users throughout a transformation. Often times, consultants travel to their client site each week. I have visited Belgium, Brazil, Slovakia, France and Singapore thus far during my career. My favorite part about the job is getting to work with people from so many different parts of the world!

### My first job out of college

I participated in IBM's 2-year Consulting by Degrees program after graduation. My project manager allowed me to rotate between various teams on the project so that I could get a well-rounded experience. This project enabled me to discover my interest in organizational change management (which is now my specialization within consulting!) My favorite part of the assignment was spending 6 weeks working in Brussels, Belgium.

## Perspectives

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

- Penn State American Marketing Association – President, Vice President of Professional Development & Marketing Career Fair Coordinator
- Smeal Student Society – President & Director of Faculty & Alumni Relations
- Management 100 Teaching Assistant
- Alpha Delta Pi Sorority

### One thing I wish I would have known as a marketing major...

I wish I understood the importance of sales. Even if we don't realize it, we utilize our selling skills each day. In retrospect, I should have taken the time to understand how sales integrates with other aspects of business.

### Memorable or helpful marketing classes

MKTG 330! Consumer Behavior was one of the best classes I took at Penn State. Dave Winterich made the content engaging, relevant and easy to understand. He went out of his way to help each student and make class fun.

### Internships

I was a Business Project Analyst for Cigna the summer after my sophomore year and a Product Development Intern for Macy's the summer after my junior year. In addition, I served as a marketing and human resources intern for the Smeal Business Career Center from 2010 thru 2013.

*“Always say yes! You never know when one opportunity will lead to another, or when something you were unsure about ends up being a tremendous experience.”*



## MISSY RIPEPI

**2012**  
*General Manager*  
**Learfield IMG College Ticket Solutions**  
 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### Professional Life

#### What my job entails

I am responsible for the ticket sales strategy and partnership between Learfield IMG College Ticket Solutions, and our partner, The University of Pittsburgh. Our goal is to drive the most revenue for the University through various initiatives such as season tickets, premium sales, and group tickets. I manage a sales team to help in our efforts of generating more revenue year over year. It is important to build relationships and trust with the University, as we creatively think of new ways to bring more people into the stadiums/arenas for all sports teams.

#### How I got to my current position

The sports industry is very small once you continue to cultivate the relationships of all the people you meet. I've found myself in various roles throughout the country with different professional sports teams and have had the opportunity to work with some really great peers and mentors. One of my former bosses reached out to me thinking I would be a good fit for the role. Since he was one of my mentors and I knew his leadership style, I was instantly interested in learning more.

### Perspectives

#### Advice for current marketing majors

Keep up with the people that you meet! Even if they are at a company or industry that you aren't necessarily interested in at the moment, you never know where you may cross paths with them again. This especially holds true when you are interviewing -whether it's for a full-time role or internship- it is important to follow up after the fact to thank them for their time and connect with them on something personal that you learned about them during your time with them. It still amazes me how few candidates do this today! Additionally, utilize the Alumni Network. Penn State has the largest Alumni base in the country for a reason! There have been many times in my career that I've reached out to former alums for advice and they have always been willing to help. We are all in this together!

*“It takes some time to get to the point where you are getting recruited for other teams within the industry, but if you work hard, be a good teammate, and do things the right way, you will find that this comes easy.”*





## GREG ROBINSON

2012

*Head of Digital Marketing*

**College Ave Student Loans**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

As the head of digital marketing at a high-growth start up, my primary responsibility is developing and executing a cross-channel marketing strategy that maximizes new customer acquisition.

### My first job out of college

An 18-month leadership development program with eBay providing exposure to different areas of the business. My rotations included digital marketing, project management, and marketing analytics. Having the opportunity to participate in a development program was extremely beneficial in building a diverse skillset, and I would highly recommend undergrads explore similar programs.

### Every marketing major should...

Become proficient in Excel. It's not the shiny object most think of when it comes to marketing, but it's a staple in most marketing roles at all levels. It's a powerful tool that will make you more effective.

## Perspectives

### How I got to my current position

I treated the first few years of my career as a fast-paced opportunity to build a strong marketing foundation. After gaining extensive knowledge in digital and acquisition marketing at eBay, I joined the brand strategy team at Capital One to round out my skill set. This enabled me to take a lead marketing role with an early-stage start-up and assume a great deal of responsibility early in my career, where I was able to continue learning and building upon that foundation while helping to grow a business from the ground up.

### Being a marketing major was...

An excellent decision. The coursework associated with a business degree at Penn State is very diverse, so you are able to build a solid foundation in business while concentrating on marketing. There are so many different avenues you can take with a marketing degree, especially when you have an overall understanding of business.

### Advice to undergrads

Use your coursework and internships to build a strong foundation and hone in on what interests you the most. Lastly, network—talk to people, explore opportunities, expose yourself. It's an obvious yet underutilized tactic.

*“Approach everything with a curious mind and a willingness to learn.”*



## ERIK D. ROSENSTRAUCH

1992

President and CEO

**FUEL Partnerships**

Boca Raton, Florida

### Perspectives

#### Memorable or helpful marketing classes

Two courses that provided information that I still leverage today were consumer behavior and presentations. It is imperative to understand what motivates consumers to make decisions and how they process information. And this base behavior is consistent through changes in technology and generations. Also, I took a course in developing compelling and concise presentations. The reality is that everyone is always selling everyday of their lives. This class helped me formulate how to persuade people to understand and follow my way of thinking, which has been essential throughout my life.

### Professional Life

#### What my job entails

Leading an incredibly talented team to create retail marketing programs for national brands that are executed at national retailers. Our clients are consumer product brands that people use everyday, such as; Budweiser, Atkins, Jarritos, Blue Diamond, Old Spice, Del Monte, Kind, Tabasco, Sabra, etc. *FUEL Partnerships* just placed in the top 1/3 of Inc's 5000 fastest growing private companies.

#### How I got to my current position

Took the leap into becoming an entrepreneur. Leveraged decades of experience and confidence to follow my passion and build my own company.

#### My first job out of college

Sales position at Westvaco

#### How I found my first job

The Penn State placement office

*“Question the current status of marketing. What works today, may not be the most efficient and effective method in the future. Push to learn more, so you can shape the future of consumer communication. If you aren't ‘swimming against the crowd’ then you will never make your mark on the industry.”*

#### What I look for when recruiting

There are three characteristics that define success: 1. Passion: Energy and interest is the number one factor that separates the best employees. 2. Desire to learn: Everyone should be in a learning mode every day. Always focus on self-improvement. 3. Intellectual horsepower: The ability to connect the dots and understand the next step. I never expect anyone to know everything about the job/role...as leaders it is our job to train and educate. But it is important to have employees who think through the process.



## RACHEL SASLAW

2014

Global Product Marketing Manager

**SuperAwesome**

New York, New York

## Professional Life

### My first job out of college

A rotational program at Unilever as a Marketing/Customer Development Management Trainee. For three years, I rotated within the marketing and customer development fields to learn about the opportunities in marketing and sales that Unilever offers. It gave me a global perspective on how the company worked. I was able to move around functionally and geographically to narrow down my interests and strengths at Unilever. It was an accelerated program that allowed me to move at a rapid pace, learn quickly, and position myself for a leadership role.

### What my current job entails

As a product marketing manager, I am the liaison between our product managers and our customer facing teams (sales and customer success) to ensure that we are telling a consistent, customer-centric message to our clients. I am a storyteller and a messenger, making sure that customer feedback helps to inform our product roadmaps, and sales and customer success are consistently telling a narrative that our customers care about.

## Perspectives

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

Your degree does not define your career path. Your degree gives you a toolkit to position yourself to fit business needs in any setting. Marketing is also a very large spectrum, and there are many avenues within marketing worth exploring through internships and co-ops. I encourage any undergraduate to reach out to recent grads and conduct informational interviews about their corporate experiences. It will paint a fuller picture as to how marketing roles vary and where your interests and skills lie.

### Being a marketing major was...

Dynamic! You really get a breadth of knowledge and holistic business experience as a marketing major. It is a little daunting because the opportunities seem so endless. There is a lot of work that is required outside of your classes to soul search, talk to marketing professionals, and identify your strengths and passions within marketing, since it's such a broad major. It really is full of opportunity and can be applied to so many different career paths. Marketing never pigeon-holed me, and I found it to be effortless to cater my learnings from my degree to any job I was applying to. I had a strategic mindset with a creative edge, which is very attractive for employers.

*“You’ll start to pick up on little nuggets about yourself and narrow down industries and careers that really fire you up. Know your worth and know the value you bring to an organization.”*



## MELISSA SCHIPKE

**2009**  
*Co-Founder*

**Tassl**

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

### Professional Life

#### What my job entails

I currently own and operate a marketing and engagement analytics company that helps support network engagement strategies for higher education and nonprofit organizations.

#### My first job out of college

I worked as a territory sales manager for Altria Group in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

#### How I got to my current position

I left Corporate America in 2014 to start my own technology company. We raised two rounds of capital and have been growing since 2015.

#### Every marketing major should...

Get involved with student organizations or projects around campus/downtown to get experiences outside of the classroom to support in classroom learning.



## HANNAH STERN

2020

*Customer Strategy Analyst*

**Johnson & Johnson**

Skillman, New Jersey

### Professional Life

#### My first job out of college

Marketing Leadership Development Program at Johnson & Johnson! My first rotation of three was experience as a Customer Strategy Analyst.

#### What my job entails

I am a Customer Strategy Analyst for Johnson & Johnson, concentrated on the sales and marketing of our baby brands: Johnsons, Aveeno Baby, and Desitin. My day to day consists of communicating with retailer teams to ensure marketing strategy is aligned across all channels where baby products are sold. My favorite aspect is strategizing for our ecommerce customers, and making sure our brands show up consistent and compelling online.

#### How I found my job

Networking! And I couldn't have done it without the amazing relationship between J&J and Smeal.



## ASHLEY VELI

2014

*General Manager, East Coast Operations*

**Zeus Living**

New York, New York

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I am the General Manager for the East Coast business at Zeus Living, a furnished housing start up. As a GM, I am responsible for all aspects of the business from top line to bottom, which in our industry means I manage everything from maintenance, to warehousing, to customer support, and finance.

### How I got to my current position

Three years after graduating from Penn State, I attended Harvard Business School for my MBA. During my MBA I made a career pivot from Healthcare to Real Estate. I landed my current role after a very long networked job search, but it was worth the wait!

### How I found my first job

My first job out of PSU was with the company I had done an internship with between junior and senior year. Internships are important and there are many ways to land a great one. I landed both of my pre-graduation internships through networking and reaching out to companies I was interested in.

## Perspectives

### One thing I wish I knew when I was a marketing major...

How many roles are available to you. We are all familiar with the traditional marketing functions, but every aspect of running a business relates back to marketing. You can be in any function in the business and still rely on the foundation you built as a marketing major.

### Minor

Business Law

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

Mock Trial, President

### Internships

Columbia Record and Cardinal Health

### Memorable or helpful marketing classes

Consumer Behavior and Market Research ended up being some of the most helpful courses to my career. So much of what you'll do in your career, whether you stay in a pure Marketing function or not, will involve the psychology of consumer behavior and you'll need excellent and actionable research to discern those behaviors.

### What I look for when recruiting

Drive and being quick-to-learn. Experience is fantastic, but you can't teach grit and aptitude. I hire plenty of young people who may have never worked in my field before but who are creative problem solvers with a strong work ethic and a go-getter attitude.

*"Smeal will provide you with a fantastic foundation for your career and the marketing faculty is outstanding."*



## BRANDY COHN WARWAS

2013

Marketing Manager

**Indeed**

Austin, Texas

## Perspectives

### Extracurricular activities and leadership roles

Phi Gamma Nu Professional Business Fraternity; The Daily Collegian Business Division—Creative Department; Penn State Hillel.

### Internships

GfK Custom Research, Johnson & Johnson, Signature Communications, Philadelphia Magazine

### What I look for when recruiting

When talking to new grads, it is all about ability to learn on the job and operate under ambiguity. Most companies use your GPA as an indicator of capability rather than existing knowledge you'd use on the job.

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I create content and experiences that help prepare job seekers for the opportunities they'll find on Indeed, such as the new [Job Cast](#) virtual workshop program, which has provided career guidance to hundreds of thousands of people out of work during the pandemic.

### My first job out of college

Strategy & Operations Business Analyst at Deloitte Consulting

### How I found my first job

I applied on Nittany Lion Career Network even though it was rare for marketing majors to go into strategy consulting at that time.

### How I got to my current position

After several years in consulting, I wanted a job at a mission-driven company with better work/life balance...so I applied on Indeed.

### Additional Major

Advertising

### Being a marketing major was...

Great for practicing creativity and collaboration -- plenty of "group projects" in the real world.

### Every marketing major should...

Look outside those jobs only offered at the marketing career fair. There are many other, not strictly "marketing" opportunities out there, like consulting or UX, that still utilize the skills you've learned.

### Additional Advice

Check out Indeed's [Career Explorer](#) and [Career Guide](#) to learn about potential career paths and how to actually land a job in that field.

*"You need way more technical skills out in the real world. Double majoring or minoring in something technology-related would have been extremely beneficial."*



## ALLY ZIMMERMAN

**2014**

*Senior Manager, Brands*

**Wasserman**

Brooklyn, New York

## Professional Life

### What my job entails

I currently work at a full-service sports and entertainment marketing agency, Wasserman. I sit on the brands team as a Senior Manager. I've worked across multiple brand clients managing partnerships with various teams/leagues, executing hospitality events, and most recently, renegotiating a copious number of sponsorship contracts during the ever-changing sports landscape of 2020.

### My first job out of college

Account Trainee at Octagon. I traveled frequently across the country facilitating sponsorship for my clients at local charity golf tournaments.

### How I got to my current position

Networking and relationships. While at previous companies, I also focused on becoming specialized in specific skills and gaining expertise in certain areas of the business to help make moves into other positions more seamless and become a more desirable candidate.

