

Alan M. Berks

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SUMMARY

Content strategist, editor, copywriter, speechwriter, technical writer, and project manager who creates and innovates. Is excited to help you produce elegant, efficient, multi-platform strategies or single media messages with impact.

RECENT CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

→ Led the rebranding and communications transformation of 100+ year-old social service center into a 21st century arts-infused center for creativity and community—including logo, font, building-wide redesign, print and digital media. *Increased annual attendance by 150% in 4 years and helped serve 26,000 people from marginalized neighborhoods.*

→ Founded in 2008, built, managed writers and staff, wrote articles, created video and audio interviews (and sold in 2017) Minnesota's premier online trade publication for the performing arts, growing to serve approximately 25,000 unique visitors a month and 2000 visitors a day with job and training announcements, calendar listings, talent database, and articles and videos.

→ Co-founded three acclaimed, successful theater companies with oversight of marketing, fundraising, budget, and strategic planning: [Thirst Theater](#) (2004-2007), [Workhaus Collective](#) (2006-2016), and [Wonderlust Productions](#) (2014-Present)

SKILLS/CORE COMPETENCIES

Content Management: Writing, editing, and proofreading. Editorial development. Script writing. Speech writing. Technical writing. Interviewing/reporting. Research. Website management. Content mapping. Email marketing. Social media marketing. Grassroots marketing and community outreach. Google analytics. HTML. Word Press. Drupal. Video editing. Audio editing.

Leadership: Design thinking. Multi-program management. Consensus building. Collaboration training. Strategic planning. Team management. Training and mentoring. Public speaking. Volunteer management. Event management.

RECENT WORK EXPERIENCE

Director of Communications

2010-2014

Pillsbury House + Theatre, Pillsbury United Communities, Minneapolis, MN

- Led design-thinking process for agency-wide strategies to improve brand recognition and increased program participation
- Advanced stories for external and internal consumption via newsletters, print materials, press releases, videos, radio, television, and other media outlets
- Maintained website, social media, and other online marketing venues
- Directed graphic design and other visual communications strategies
- Managed external relations, marketing, and press relations for agency, professional theatre, service programs, and other business ventures

Publisher/Editor/Co-Founder

2008-2017

MinnesotaPlaylist.com, Minneapolis, MN

- Responsible for editorial vision and voice for entire publication
- Assigned articles, worked with writers on multiple drafts, and formatted articles with basic html.
- Wrote 2-5 articles per month including in-depth features, clever how-to guides, commentary, and analysis
- Created audio and video interviews with theater leaders in the Twin Cities
- Invented and applied new ways to use technology to deliver content about Twin Cities theater
- Marketed content using social media, email, and live events

Co-Artistic Director

2014-Present

Wonderlust Productions, St. Paul, MN

- Facilitate story gathering in communities whose experiences are often ignored or misunderstood.
- Collaborate with the community and other artists to transform those stories into powerful new live events.
- Write and direct collaborations between professional artists and community members.
- Oversee all aspects of Wonderlust Productions administration including grant writing, budgeting, marketing, and strategic planning.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Teacher: Business Communications, University of St. Thomas, Full-time MBA program.

Also: Business writing, Composition/Rhetoric, Playwrighting @ University of Minnesota, St. Cloud State University, Loyola University Chicago, Columbia College Chicago, Arizona State University, Center for Talented Youth.

Production Editor: The San Francisco Examiner.

Freelance Communications/PR Specialist/Writer: The Lawlor Group. SUCCEED Consulting. History Theatre. Mixed Blood Theatre. Mu Performing Arts. Private clients.

RECENT AWARDS/HONORS

Excellence in Management, Pillsbury United Communities;
Best Playwright in Twin Cities, Runner-Up, *Star Tribune*;
Artist Initiative Grant (2), Minnesota State Arts Board;
MacDowell Colony Fellow;
Jerome Foundation Fellow

EDUCATION

Columbia University (New York, NY)

Bachelor of Arts, May 1994

Arizona State University (Phoenix, AZ)

Master of Fine Arts, May 2000

RECOMMENDATIONS (excerpted)

“The things I most appreciate about Alan’s work was the deep listening he uses to first understand who the PHT intended audiences were and what was important to them, and then how he developed creative ways to engage them that both embodied the spirit of PHT and honored the consumer. A couple of examples of the multidisciplinary, highly engaging marketing tools Alan created include: an interactive map of PHT Arts on Chicago public art projects, a graphic novel version of our annual season brochure, and an expanded and improved website. And while the ‘how’ of the marketing and promotions processes that Alan led at PHT were extremely important and aligned with our mission and values, the results were clear – attendance at PHT activities and events increased exponentially during his tenure.”

— Noel Raymond, Pillsbury United Communities

“Alan is a superb editor and writer. I've written for him on a range of subjects, and his insight--from the development of an idea throughout the entire editorial process--is exceptional. He knows his material well, develops the content of each issue with both knowledge and curiosity, and draws out of his writers an unusual quality of work. He is demanding in the very best way, driving at a deeper level of analysis and a more comprehensive overview of each article's subject. Working with him has improved my own articles, and I write for him every chance I get.”

-- Marya Hornbacher, Bestselling author of *Wasted* and *Madness*.

“Alan Berks is very adept at tailoring his writing to fit the conventions of whatever particular style or "voice" is required for his assignment. I've also been impressed with his diligence during the information-gathering stage, when he essentially functions as an investigative reporter. And Alan is an editor's dream in terms of how flexible he is during the revision stage. He's a complete professional when it comes to both the process and the product of his work.”

-- Amy Foster, Director of Content Development at Lawlor Group

Additional references available on request.