

# Justin Varney | Social Media Professional

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**Freelancer/Contractor** – Detroit, MI

January 2025 – Present

### **Social Media Strategist/Digital Content Lead**

- **Social Media Strategy & Campaign Management** – Create social media strategic plans, including goals, objectives & KPIs, campaign & content strategies, and sentiment & engagement reports; align social media strategic approach with overarching business goals, marketing initiatives, and communications plans
- **Content Ideation & Implementation** – Identify unique & engaging content opportunities; optimize content strategies to specific social media channels, target audiences, and trending formats; plan, shoot, and edit mobile content
- **Community Growth & Reputation Building** – Execute out-of-the-box viral growth tactics that break through the saturated social media noise; build a loyal, passionate, and active community; gauge community sentiment, incorporate UGC strategies, and drive effective engagement strategies
- **Thought Leadership & Client Collaboration** – Meet with clients, creative teams, and partners to collaborate, ideate, & lead within the ever-evolving social media landscape; monitor, track & report metrics to make innovative, data-informed decisions

**Bedrock Detroit** – Detroit, MI

January 2022 – January 2025

### **Director of Social Media**

- **Social Media Management & Communications Strategic Planning** – Developed and implemented strategic social media communications, increasing Bedrock's social media following by 25%; created strategic plans to effectively communicate Bedrock milestones, accolades, and achievements, while maintaining brand identity and standards; collaborated with in-house Marketing team and agencies to develop paid media campaigns
- **Leadership & Team Development** – Led in-house social media team and agency partners to implement social media communication plans; collaborated with internal Public Relations, Marketing, and Multimedia teams to align on creative & communication goals; coordinated local and national partnerships to build Bedrock's brand; leveraged social media trends and knowledge to inform team development and advocacy
- **Influencer Marketing & Partnership Collaborations** – Ideated and executed social media influencer campaigns; identified unique opportunities to pitch, partner, and position micro and macro influencer campaigns to represent Bedrock and other notable Detroit accounts to local, national, and international audiences
- **Content Creation & Community Growth** – Created engaging social media content that resonated with target audiences and identified unique storytelling opportunities to position Bedrock and Detroit on a national scale; optimized content for specific channels, which resulted in viral moments on Instagram, TikTok and Facebook (Meta); implemented a UGC sharing strategy to increase social media engagement; built trust with online communities by fostering meaningful interactions and becoming a customer service liaison between the brand and the online community
- **Experiential Marketing & Brand Activations** – Curated experiences for influencers, including Detroit grand openings/private events, media days, and PR boxes; tapped into Detroit events to bring additional experiences to the downtown Detroit community

**University of Michigan (UMSocial)** – Ann Arbor, MI

March 2019 – January 2022

### **Social Media Strategist**

- **Content Creation & Social Media Management** – Developed and implemented a vertical video strategy on Instagram Reels and TikTok that increased followers by 30K in six months; utilized students, faculty, and staff for creative storytelling; identified trends to create viral content opportunities; posted daily content on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X/Twitter, and LinkedIn; created a social media engagement strategy to amplify UGC and connect with our online community
- **Communications & Social Media Crisis Strategy** – Collaborated with teams and leadership to align on social media messaging for crises; developed social media monitoring systems for ongoing tracking, reported public sentiment, and developed and implemented content strategies to address crises; utilized social media as primary

driver of information

- **Leadership & Team Development** – Led a team of social media student interns; showcased thought leadership through presentations and meetings with university leaders; organized and coordinated social media content development sessions
- **Cross-campus Collaboration & Partnerships** – Coordinated collaboration opportunities with individual schools and colleges, departments and institutes, and faculty, researchers, staff and students; identified strategic content partnerships including videos, podcasts, and other digital storytelling

**Penn State University, Greater Allegheny** – McKeesport, PA

September 2017 – March 2019

#### **Social Media/PR Specialist**

- **Communications & Marketing Planning** – Developed and executed a new plan focused on the creation of custom content, including video and photography production; collaborated with paid media partners and drove earned media opportunities, assisted with website content, event marketing, print and digital communications
- **Content Creation & Social Media Management** – Created digital/social media content and marketing materials designed to enhance awareness and elevate the brand of Penn State Greater Allegheny; engaged with current, prospective, and former students to increase enrollment and stay connected with Penn State community
- **Leadership & Mentorship** – Led Penn State's first-ever internship program; mentored two interns per semester to build communication plans and develop content
- **Recruitment & Event Planning** – Collaborated with internal teams to drive recruitment efforts and assist with student recruitment events; created marketing and communications materials and plans to increase enrollment

#### **SKILLS & PROGRAMS**

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- **Social Media Platforms** – Facebook (Meta), Instagram, X/Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, Business Manager, Ads Manager, Spotify
- **Social Media Monitoring Systems** – Sprout, Hootsuite, Meltwater, Sprinklr
- **Social Media Influencer Marketing** – Campaign briefs & outreach, content development & collaboration, measuring success & ROIs
- **Content Creation Software** – Adobe Suite, Photoshop, Lightroom, Premiere, InDesign, After Effects, Canva, CapCut
- **Microsoft Office Suite** – PowerPoint, Word, Excel, Teams, Outlook
- **Website & Email Marketing Software** – Drupal, WordPress, MailChimp, Eventbrite
- **Conference Participation** – SXSW, Social Media Week, Inbound, ICSC

#### **PROJECTS**

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- **Social Media Consulting, Strategy Development & Content Creation** – Western Michigan University, Western Michigan Advancement, University of Michigan School of Information, ReBoot4Success, Angel Arms, Autism Speaks, EverPower Wind Holdings, Wilkinson Tree Farm

#### **EDUCATION**

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**Point Park University** – Pittsburgh, PA

*MA*, Communication Technology

**California University of Pennsylvania** – California, PA

*BA*, Psychology