

ILSA RUIZ HUGHES

Driftwood, TX | Monterrey, MX | Madrid, SP | (+1) 512-772-9643 | ilsaruizhughes@gmail.com | [LinkedIn](#) | [Website](#)

Global Communications & PR Executive • Storytelling Strategist • Function Builder

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Highly accomplished and passionate communications strategist with 18+ years of progressive experience in corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability. Extensive track record of leading communications and PR strategies in both traditional and highly matrixed organizations for executive and specialized audiences globally. Skilled in building highly effective teams, translating complex concepts into riveting narratives, and adapting to steep learning curves and dynamic cross-cultural environments.

KEY SKILLS

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Strategic Planning | • Global Partnerships | • Global Event Strategy | • Data-Driven Decision Making |
| • People Leadership | • Branding Refreshing | • Thought Leadership | • Process Improvement |
| • Coaching and Mentoring | • Change Management | • Budget Management | • Relationship Management |

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Associate Director of Communications, The Nature Conservancy, JUN 2023 - Present

Recruited by the global carbon markets team of one of the widest-reaching environmental organizations in the world to develop and execute a multi-year communications strategy that could help strengthen trust in innovative climate financing mechanisms.

- Launched a carbon markets thought leadership article series focusing on the most controversial topics around nature-based carbon markets resulting in 100% increase in website visits and 58% in social media engagement.
- Designed and led the development of an executive social media strategy for our carbon markets lead spokesperson that led to a 1500% increase in post engagement and reach.
- Created a three-year communications strategy including external, internal, policy and fundraising objectives that has resulted in a 150% increase in positive media mentions and has been used as a reference for other BU's strategies.
- Led the refreshing of the global carbon markets business unit's digital presence including content auditing, SEO optimization, and content update that resulted in a 200% increase in website visits.

Senior Communications and Events Manager, CEO Water Mandate, JUN 2021 - JUN 2023

Hired by a UN Global Compact and Pacific Institute co-led initiative that mobilizes over 220 business leaders (representing over \$7T market cap) to establish and grow the newly created comms function and elevate water stewardship in the global agenda.

- Expanded global visibility and influence by driving a 200% increase in participation at high-profile global events through strategic outreach and relationship-building with convening organizations across Europe, the Americas, Asia, and Africa.
- Orchestrated a platform-focused growth strategy that led to a 132% increase in engagement rate and a 62% rise in new followers on Twitter (now X) over two years, positioning the organization as a key voice in water stewardship circles.
- Led a global communications push that resulted in a 35% increase in earned media coverage across priority markets, enhancing organizational reputation and visibility in international discourse on corporate water sustainability.
- Championed the development of the organization's first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion charter, securing executive leadership buy-in, that improved hiring practices, internal resource allocation, and overall team satisfaction.

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Chief of External Affairs and Administration, FEMSA Foundation, FEB 2010 – JUN 2021

Brought in to develop and grow a multi-tiered communications, PR and operations team over the course of 11 years for the corporate foundation of FEMSA, holding company for the largest Coca-Cola bottler in the world, with operations in 13 countries.

- Launched the Foundation's first social media strategy, achieving engagement levels 150% above industry benchmarks.
- Established a stakeholder intelligence function that enhanced executive decision-making, enabling leadership to act on data-driven insights for partnerships, donor engagement, and strategic positioning.
- Optimized the operational budget by 13%, streamlining expenditures without compromising impact or program delivery.
- Secured sustained growth in media visibility, delivering a consistent increase of 50% or more year over year in coverage across local, national, and international outlets.
- Led the Foundation's strategic planning and reporting process for its Board of Directors presentations, providing continuity and vision across three leadership transitions.
- Elevated the Foundation's global presence by designing and leading concept-to-execution of international events across the US, Latin America, and Europe, reaching over 2500 participants.

SELECT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

BA in Spanish Literature and Linguistics, Tecnológico de Monterrey

Design Thinking: Strategy for Creative Thinking and Innovation, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México

Communication Planning for Change, eCornell University

Macroeconomics of climate change: science, economics, and policies, International Monetary Fund

Journalists in the Digital Era as Agents and Leaders for Social Change, Tecnológico de Monterrey / FEMSA

MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS

President and Past-President, Mensa – Mexican National Chapter | FEB 2018 – FEB 2022 (Lifetime member)

Senior Editor and Member, Chinampa MX – Mexican Women in Sustainability Network | JUL 2021 – Present

TECHNICAL SKILLS

LANGUAGES

- Spanish – Native
- English – Bilingual
- French – Advanced
- Portuguese – Intermediate

SOFTWARE AND APPS

Office 365

Word
PowerPoint
Excel
Teams
Outlook
Copilot

Design

Illustrator
InDesign
Canva
Photoshop

Digital

Adobe AEM CMS
Wordpress
Constant Contact
MailChimp
Slack
Zoom Conferences

Social Media

Facebook
LinkedIn
X
Instagram
Hootsuite

Project Mgmt

Asana
Trello
Microsoft Project

Admin

SAP
Workday