

HOWARD WITT

SUMMARY

Dynamic Internet innovator and architect of award-winning websites. Marketing expert practiced in crisis communications, growing earned media and boosting social media exposure. Versatile editor, manager and journalist with skills honed during three-decade career as newsroom executive, foreign correspondent and national correspondent. Proven recruiter of diverse, highly talented employees. Experienced internationalist with on-the-ground knowledge of more than 70 countries in the Americas, Middle East, Europe, Africa and Asia.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Miller Center for Public Affairs (University of Virginia)

Director of Communications, 2015-Present (Charlottesville, VA)

Lafayette Journal & Courier

Executive Editor, 2013-2015 (Lafayette, IN)

Stars and Stripes

Senior Managing Editor, 2009-2013 (Washington, DC)

Chicago Tribune

Houston Bureau Chief, 2003-2009

Chief Diplomatic Correspondent, 2001-2003

Associate Managing Editor/Interactive News, 1997-99

Chief of Correspondents, 1996

Los Angeles Bureau Chief, 1995

Moscow Correspondent, 1992-94

Africa Correspondent, 1990-91

Canada Correspondent, 1987-89

Midwest Correspondent, 1986

General Assignment Reporter, 1982-85

Washington City Paper

Editor-in-Chief, 2000-2001 (Washington, DC)

MinorityInterest.com

Chief Operating Officer, 2000 (New York, NY)

SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Inspiring Manager

- Supervise Miller Center communications staff of 11 responsible for web, video and print products.
- Directed more than 50 journalists at the *Lafayette Journal & Courier*, *Muncie Star Press* and *Richmond Palladium-Item* providing award-winning online, mobile and print coverage of three Indiana communities.
- Led 100-person *Stars and Stripes* editorial staff producing independent daily newspaper and Internet products for U.S. service members overseas. Reinvigorated news coverage, leading to a Polk Award and a National Headliner Award for Public Service.
- Restructured four editorial departments to reduce staff and expenses while simultaneously increasing productivity and awarding incentive raises to top employees.
- Overhauled performance evaluation systems to emphasize fairness, consistency, and clear expectations.
- Supervised staff of 20 *Chicago Tribune* foreign and national correspondents.
- Led and developed staff of 65 employees who designed and produced *Chicago Tribune* websites.
- Mentored writers and editors at *Washington City Paper* alternative weekly while expanding staff diversity.

Internet Innovator

- Led comprehensive redesign of millercenter.org, third-largest U.S. think tank website (5.2m uniques/year).
- Doubled year-over-year earned media appearances for Miller Center experts (valued at \$4.1 million/month).
- Directed geometric growth on Miller Center social media channels (10x increase in Facebook “likes” and reach)
- Created and taught new metrics-driven analytical approach to journalistic decision-making in Gannett newsrooms across the country.
- Charted new Internet growth strategy for *Stars and Stripes* and led redesign of stripes.com website, positioning it as a curated gateway for military news updated 24/7 by editors around the world.
- Forged new social media relationships that demonstrated how mainstream journalists and bloggers could enhance each other's work, leading to [viral distribution of my stories](#) to huge new audiences.
- Managed the *Chicago Tribune's* early forays onto the web, [pioneering a bold front-page web design](#).
- Guided content strategies for MinorityInterest.com, a start-up targeted at underserved American audiences.

Groundbreaking Journalist

- Created new [national civil rights beat](#) at the *Chicago Tribune*.
- Uncovered stories that led to a \$9 million court award for the [victim of a racial beating](#), the [release from prison of a 14-year-old girl](#) and the [largest American civil rights demonstration](#) in a generation.
- Won five national journalism awards.
- Chronicled historic events including the [Oklahoma City bombing](#), the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the end of apartheid in South Africa, [Hurricane Katrina](#) and the election of President Barack Obama.

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

B.A., Magna Cum Laude, English Language & Literature

LANGUAGES

Russian, German

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Member, University of Virginia President's Commission on the University in the Age of Segregation
- Member, 100 Black Men of Central Virginia
- Member, Regional Boys & Girls Club Board of Directors, Washington, DC
- Weekly volunteer, Brooklyn Navy Yard Boys & Girls Club, New York

AWARDS RECEIVED

- Winner, 2017 Best in Class/Education Website, Interactive Media Council (*millercenter.org*)
- Winner, 2017 Best General Education Website, Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts (*millercenter.org*)
- Winner, 2014 Society of Professional Journalists-Indiana/Story of the Year (*Journal & Courier*)
- Winner, 2014 Best of Gannett/Public Service (*Journal & Courier*)
- Winner, 2014 APME-Indiana/First Amendment-Community Affairs (*Journal & Courier*)
- Winner, 2014 Hoosier State Press Association/Best News Coverage (*Journal & Courier*)
- Winner, 2013 Society of Professional Journalists-Indiana/Non-deadline Series (*Journal & Courier*)
- Winner, 2013 Best of Gannett/Planned Content (*Journal & Courier*)
- Winner, 2010 Military Reporters & Editors Award (*Stars and Stripes*)
- Winner, 2009 Polk Award/Military Reporting (*Stars and Stripes*)
- Winner, 2009 National Headliner Award/Public Service (*Stars and Stripes*)
- Finalist, 2008 Pulitzer Prize/National Reporting
- Winner, 2008 Taylor Family Award for Fairness, Nieman Foundation at Harvard University
- Winner, 2008 American Judicature Society Toni House Journalism Award
- Winner, 2008 Chicago Bar Association Herman Kogan Media Award