

# MedComms News

THE CLINICAL PROFESSIONALS GROUP

## MedComms PROFESSIONALS

### Merging Medical Communications

Medical communications is an exciting industry for a whole variety of reasons. For one thing, the agency landscape is constantly shifting. While pharmaceutical companies are decades in the making, a brand new medical communications business can spring up in what feels like the blink of an eye.

Every now and then, one of these impressive new kids on the block will attract the notice of a larger conglomerate. Joining forces removes a heavyweight competitor for clients' attention but also allows both parties to pool their resources and strengthen their strategic communications offering. New services can be rolled out and these fresh partnerships are bound to spark different and novel ideas for innovative healthcare communications programmes.

Over the past year we've seen a variety of agencies get into bed (metaphorically speaking) with one another. When such a deal takes place there are many questions to ask going forward, will the acquired company retain its independent identity or be rebranded? Of late we've seen plenty of examples of both.

For instance, Langland may have been welcomed aboard the Publicis Group but the creative advertising agency has been left largely to its own devices. On the other hand, Choice Healthcare Solutions joined Open Health earlier this year and will be amalgamated into their Succinct brand.

Whether original company names are retained or not it's clear that excellent new talent will have been gained on both sides. Great things will be expected of such partnerships such as those between Just:: Healthcare and the Havas Group, Cogora and PCM and, most recently, Ashfield's new purchase of Pegasus in a deal worth up to £16.8m.



#### INDUSTRY NEWS

LEO Pharma picks up AZ skin disease drugs in \$1bn deal

Omnicom launches new DDB Health network

Diabetes UK uses Lego to address diabetes myths

Just:: Health Communications becomes HAVAS Just::

inVentiv Health wins Pfizer account



#### MEET THE MEDCOMMS TEAM

- + SARAH GODDARD
- + DANIELA FOSTER-TURNER
- + MATT THOMAS
- + ROSALIND MARTIN
- + ASHLEE WILEY



#### SITE OF THE MONTH

dafont.com

A great database of a variety of different fonts, many of which are free

### MedComms Professionals: Junior Assessment Centre July 2016!



Recently we have noticed that there is somewhat of a talent shortage within the 1-3 years of experience level in the medical communications sector. Rather than fret about this concerning trend, we decided to be proactive and do something to help. Thus the MedComms Professionals Assessment Centre was born!

The Assessment Centre has been carefully designed and co ordinated to give junior candidates a taste of how an agency operates, whilst also providing an opportunity to show off their potential. We take the time to identify the most promising life science graduates and put them through their paces with a writing test and other tasks including a presentation and a leadership exercise. Afterwards we provide plenty of feedback in order to identify areas for the graduates to develop and gain that competitive edge over others when applying for roles in Med Comms.

**Our next Junior Assessment Centre will be taking place at our offices on Thursday 7th July. If you would like information on our successful candidates please email [apply@medcommsprofessionals.com](mailto:apply@medcommsprofessionals.com)**

#### IMPORTANT DATES - JULY

JULY 1ST	INTERNATIONAL REGGAE DAY
JULY 1ST	40 YR ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST APPLE COMPUTER WENT ON SALE
JULY 4TH	INDEPENDENCE DAY
JULY 4TH - 10TH	HEALTH INFO WEEK
JULY 5TH	20 YR ANNIVERSARY OF DOLLY THE SHEEP
JULY 11TH	WORLD POPULATION DAY
JULY 24TH	24/7 SAMARITANS AWARENESS DAY
JULY 28TH	WORLD HEPATITIS DAY
JULY 29TH	INTERNATIONAL TIGER DAY
JULY 30TH	50 YR ANNIVERSARY ENGLAND WON THE WORLD CUP

# Freelancing in the Medical Communications Market



As medical writers, editors and account handlers climb the ladder within the medical communications industry some will inevitably feel the temptation to tip over into freelancing. For some it can be the chance to break out of a niche and put a wide breadth of experience to good use on a range of different projects. No one agency will be able to offer the same scope of variety that a freelance career nor the flexibility that comes from being your own boss.

While an agency's preference will naturally be for permanent staff appointments, towards the latter part of 2015 and continuing into 2016 there has been a large increase in freelance usage.

We have also seen that hiring of junior staff has dipped over the past few years. With fewer candidates entering the industry altogether, this has unfortunately led to difficulties when trying to backfill more experienced positions when senior candidates decide to take the plunge into freelance work or across into commercial roles within the pharmaceutical industry itself.

So that we can help to combat some of these issues, MedComms Professionals provides opportunities to help educate graduates about the exciting careers they can have in agencies and platforms for them to shine. Our next Junior Assessment Centre is set to run in early July and we're looking forward to sending the most promising profiles round for consideration for account executive or medical writing roles.

Also, in order to better serve the needs of our clients in the hectic freelance market, our own Ashlee Wiley has seamlessly transitioned from trusted resourcer to our very first dedicated freelance consultant. Here's a little more about her:

## **What would you like clients to know about you?**

You might be able to detect a slight accent over the phone as, despite living over here since 1999, my American roots haven't completely gone away. I really do give this job my all, I've been known to get quite annoyed if I can't find the right person for a job

I'm working on. Oh, I'm also a psychology graduate which has given me an excellent insight into the healthcare industry.

## **What's the biggest challenge you foresee in recruiting within the freelance market?**

Well, the nature of freelance roles is very specific as they match an immediate client need. I'll need to understand as much as I can about what my clients are looking for in order to match them with the skill set of the freelancers I'm working with (especially so that it's a cost effective decision for all involved!)

## **What's been your most satisfying experience since joining MedComms Professionals?**

When I joined the team I was confronted with this fascinatingly complex sector I hadn't known anything about previously. Over the months I've learned so much through talking to candidates and finding them their perfect opportunities. I've now reached the point that I really know what I'm talking about and can dispense helpful career advice.

## **What advice would you give to someone contemplating the decision to go freelance?**

Do your research! Make sure you're at the right point in your career before jumping on the opportunity. It's such a busy market, what skills can you offer to justify your day rate? Operating as a freelancer is a much more complicated prospect than it used to be. Weigh up the merits of setting yourself up as a limited company versus using an umbrella company. The government is really cracking down on this sort of position so get the right insurances in place.

## **Describe yourself in 5 words or fewer:**

Friendly, knowledgeable, honest animal lover  
(we can certainly testify to the number of entertaining tales we've heard regarding the latest antics of Ashlee's cat).



# Freelancer Opportunities and Jobseekers

## Freelancer of the Month

This terrific freelancer has a wealth of experience across various areas within medical communications with a special focus on both medical education and healthcare PR.

Keen to seek out greater variety and flexibility in her work life this candidate has recently decided to take her career freelance. Over the course of her stellar career, she has worked on an array of projects including various materials such as patient support programmes, publications and advisory boards.

Her dedication to ensuring all tasks are completed in a timely fashion and within budget truly shines through and she is well versed in client liaison. This candidate has also previously trained and mentored more junior team members. She is an extremely personable individual and we're more than happy to represent her as a future asset to any team she joins.



## Freelancer #1

This freelancer is an exceptional candidate with a wealth of experience within the medical communications industry. Throughout her career, this candidate has worked on both traditional print and digital projects, covering a wide range of materials. More specifically, she has been involved in development of websites as part of brand promotional & medical education campaigns, e-marketing, development of iPad detail aids and digital assists for events - congress and medical meetings. She is very confident in leading client pitches and interacting with clients on a regular basis, she has led many teams and ensure that projects are completed in a timely manner and according to budget.

## Freelancer #2

This freelancer is a fantastic candidate with exemplary writing and editing capabilities. Throughout his career, he has lead a number of projects, ensuring that the team below him was working efficiently and according to an allocated timeline. He very much enjoyed the training and mentoring aspect of a more senior position and is happy to demonstrate these abilities in any freelancing position. This candidate is also well versed in client-facing tasks and is happy to partake in this side of the project if necessary. During his time as a medical writer, he covered both traditional print and digital materials, such as; brochures, sales aids, papers, slide kits, conference reports and apps, websites, e-details, animations and video.

## Featured Freelance Jobs

### Job #1

A boutique medical communications agency is seeking the assistance of a freelance medical writer, with previous experience in Oncology (specifically Multiple Myeloma). They are located in central London and ideally need someone to start as soon as possible.

### Job #2

A well-established medical communications agency is seeking the assistance of a freelance Account Director in their growing medical education department. They need a well-rounded individual with experience across the board, from publications to symposia, congress and websites.

If you are interested in our any of our job seekers or freelance opportunities please get in contact!

**Call: 0118 9522 792**

or

**Email: [info@medcommsprofessionals.com](mailto:info@medcommsprofessionals.com)**

## RANDOM FACTS

> Cleopatra lived closer in time to the Moon landing than to the construction of the Great Pyramid of Giza.

> A blood cell takes about 60 seconds to make a complete circuit of the body

> 'Portobello' mushrooms are just overgrown common button mushrooms. The term was invented as a brilliant marketing scheme in the 1980's to sell the previously unpopular product



### Life as a Copywriter by Mark Brough

Copywriting was the first job I purposefully got into. That might sound odd, but for years I had no idea what I wanted to do.

When I eventually started writing, it made the years of frustration worthwhile and I discovered I'd actually learnt some very useful skills on the way. Nursing, the civil service, IT, sales, account management, they all coincidentally provided

me with pretty much everything I needed to be a copywriter.

For the first time I found that I actually loved my job. I love that you can do something different every day, and the scope for learning is infinite. I love how close you have to get to a project in order to do a really good job. Really interrogating a brief is one of the greatest skills a copywriter can learn. There is always something else to find out that will help get a better understanding of the requirements and improve the end product.

Then I went freelance and fell in love with writing all over again. No standing around when work is in short supply – you get recruited to do a specific project so you're always gainfully employed. As a huge bonus you get to work with lots of different people on different types of brief.

And my relationships with the recruiters I've worked with have hugely shaped my experience of freelancing. Getting to know a creative really helps to get them the right assignments, which in turn makes for great work, happy clients and happy creatives. The holy trinity.

*"Go and make interesting mistakes, make amazing mistakes, make glorious and fantastic mistakes. Break rules. Leave the world more interesting for your being here. Make. Good. Art." ~Neil Gaiman*

### Exhibitions in London this Month

+ **London Wonderground**  
Until 25th September 2016 -  
Southbank Centre

+ **Colour & Vision: Through the Eyes of Nature**  
15th July - 6th Nov - Natural History Museum

+ **Measuring Time**  
Until 23rd Oct 2016 - Science Museum

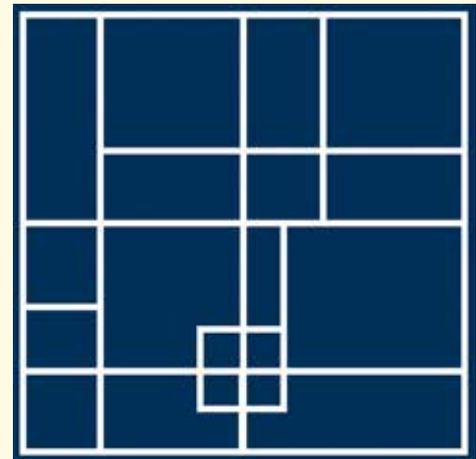
+ **David Hockney RA: 82 Portraits and 1 Still Life**  
Until 2nd Oct 2016 - Royal Academy of Arts

+ **Leonardo da Vinci: The Mechanics of Genius**  
Until 4th Sept 2016 - Science Museum

+ **BBC Proms**  
15th July - 16th Sept

### Monthly Puzzle

How many squares are in the below picture?



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