

PORTFOLIO

\Digital Strategy & Communications Architect

I am a storyteller at heart and a builder by trade. I specialize in bridging the gap between complex digital infrastructure and meaningful community engagement to grow mission impact.

About Me

Strategic Communications & Digital Growth Leader with 15+ years of experience in the international NGO and creative sectors. Expert in translating complex humanitarian initiatives into high-impact digital campaigns. Proven track record in audience acquisition, SEO/GEO optimization, and managing cross-functional teams in virtual, global environments. Combines a deep passion for mission-driven work with technical proficiency in AI, web development, and data analytics.



Kay Rudge

I am a storyteller, a dinosaur aficionado, and a curious explorer of both digital and physical worlds. Whether I'm cycling across the city, diving into a strategy board game, or managing a wonderfully chaotic home life, I approach every challenge with energy. I believe in making friends wherever I go, from a theater line to a plane ride, because every connection is a new story waiting to be told.

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01

MCC Thrift - "Road to Reopening" Digital Growth Strategy

The Problem: A Disconnected Community

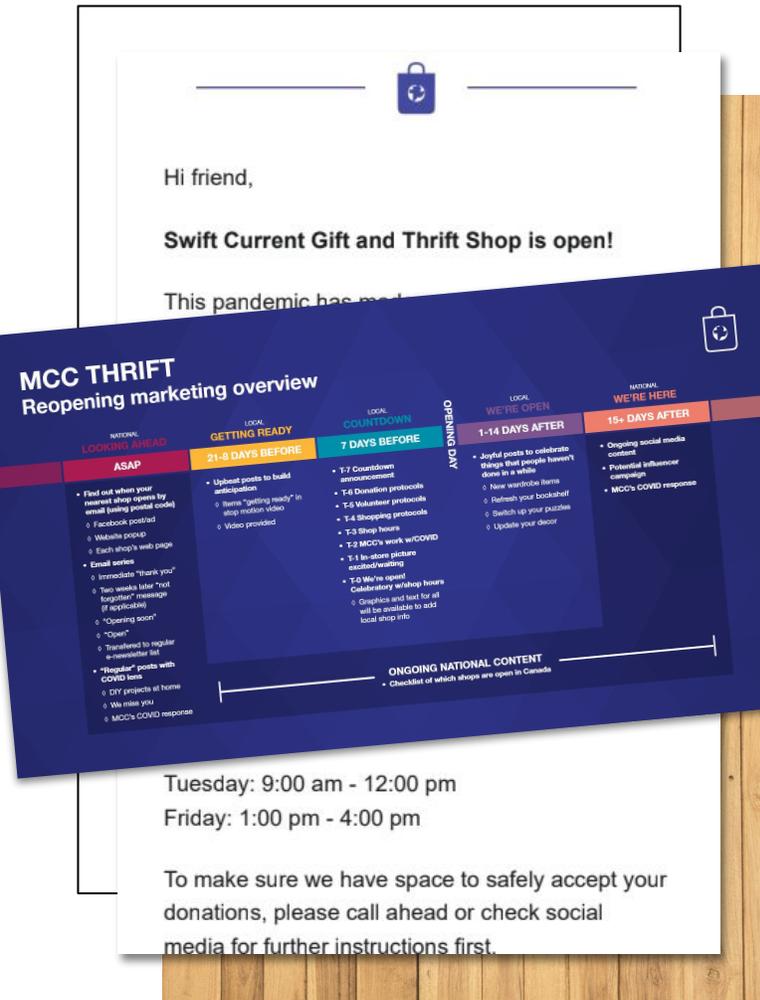
At the height of COVID-19, MCC Thrift faced a total operating freeze. All 90+ thrift shops across Canada and the US were closed, and with a vulnerable, aging volunteer base, reopening required extreme caution.

- **The Challenge:** How do we maintain connection with a fragmented customer base when physical doors are locked?
- **The Gap:** There was no centralized digital mailing list to communicate safety protocols or reopening timelines.

The Solution: A Data-Driven Engagement Funnel

I designed a "Notify Me" ecosystem to capture intent and build a national audience from the ground up.

- **Acquisition:** Launched geo-targeted social media ads (targeting an 80km radius around each shop) and website pop-ups to drive traffic to a custom sign-up form.
- **The "Smart" Form:** Captured names, emails, and postal codes to ensure customers only received hyper-local, relevant updates.
- **The Automated Journey:** I architected a multi-stage email "drip" campaign that managed the customer experience from initial anxiety to the first day of shopping:
 - The Warm-Up: Stop-motion videos of shelves being stocked to build visual anticipation.
 - The 7-Day Countdown: A daily education series covering donation protocols, volunteer stories, and safety requirements (masks/sanitizer).
 - The Mission Connection: Strategic storytelling about MCC's global relief work to remind customers of the "why" behind their thrift purchases.



The Experience: Beyond the Transaction

Understanding that the "joy of thrifting" is an experience, I extended the journey seven days post-reopening with a "Celebration" email focusing on lifestyle refreshes, new wardrobes, decluttering, and DIY decor.

To ensure long-term retention, these users were seamlessly transitioned into a newly launched permanent monthly newsletter featuring DIY tips and "feel-good" network stories.

The Results

Audience Growth & Retention

- **Rapid Acquisition:** Built a high-intent mailing list from 0 to over 15,000 subscribers in less than 60 days during a period of total retail stagnation.
- **Above Average Retention:** At the conclusion of the campaign, we recorded an unsubscribe rate of less than 0.1% which is far below industry standard for retail.

Advanced Technical Orchestration

- **Custom Infrastructure:** Architected and deployed a complex tech stack integrating Campaign Monitor, Drupal, and custom python API scripts authored by myself to smooth and automate interaction.
- **Precision Segmentation:** Managed intricate data segmentation based on user-provided postal codes, ensuring that 15,000+ individuals received accurate, time-sensitive information unique to their local geography.

Operational & Strategic Success

- **Seamless Network Recovery:** Facilitated the safe and organized reopening of nearly 100 shop locations across North America by ensuring customers were fully briefed on safety and donation protocols before arrival.
- **Stakeholder Relief:** Drastically reduced the administrative and emotional burden on local staff and volunteers by automating the "frequently asked questions" regarding reopening, allowing them to focus on store logistics and safety compliance.



02

MCC Thrift - The "Back to School" National Influencer Campaign

The Problem: Operational Fragmentation

MCC Thrift wanted to launch a nationwide "Back to School / Last Day of School" campaign to reach mothers with younger families. However, to design any contesting to capture the audience a significant technical barrier existed: the network lacked a unified Point of Sale (POS) architecture.

- **The Barrier:** Shops used a mix of digital gift cards, paper certificates, or manual in-store credit.
- **The Risk:** A national giveaway was impossible to execute without a universal way for winners to redeem prizes at any location without frustrating store managers or customers.

The Solution: "The Universal Proxy" & Influencer Strategy

I developed a hybrid administrative and marketing solution that bypassed the technical limitations of the individual shops.

- **Influencer Partnership:** I scouted and hired "mommy-blogger" influencers across every Canadian province that we have MCC Thrift shops in. Each documented their family's thrifting journey, creating authentic, relatable content for back-to-school (and last-day-of-school) fashion.
- **The "Promotional Proxy" Card:** To solve the gift card issue, I designed a "Universal Promotional Card" with unique tracking codes. Winners received these cards, which local shops would exchange for their specific local currency (credit/cert).
- **National Reimbursement System:** I created a back-end workflow where shops submitted the unique codes to the national office for direct reimbursement. This removed the administrative headache from local managers and ensured a seamless customer experience.



The Experience: Sustainability as a Message

To align with MCC's values, I ensured the medium matched the message:

- **Tactile Branding:** I sourced a specialized vendor to print the gift cards on recycled t-shirt material, turning the card itself into a conversation piece about textile waste.
- **The "Unboxing" Moment:** When winners received their card, it was accompanied by a letter detailing MCC's global sustainability efforts, reinforcing that their "win" was part of a larger environmental movement.

The Results

Audience Reach & Brand Awareness

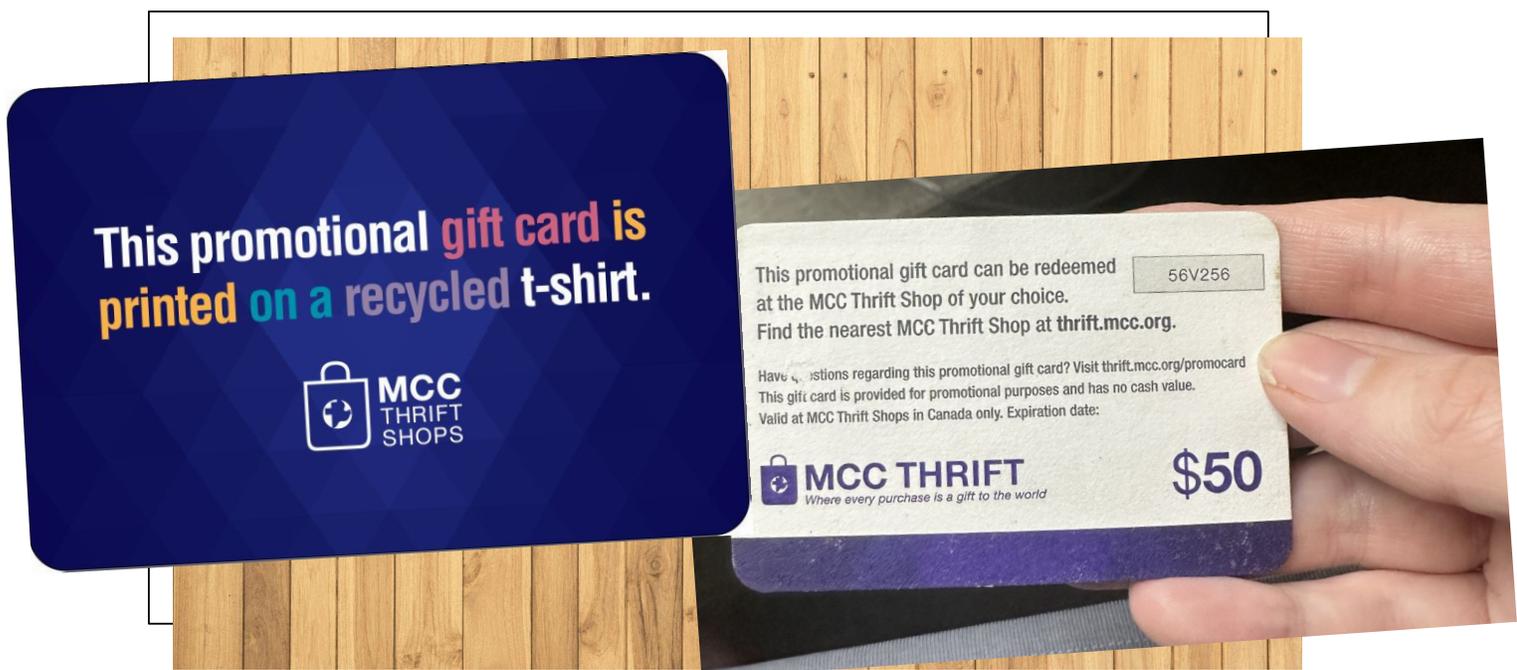
- **National Coverage:** Successfully executed the first-ever unified influencer campaign spanning all provinces, generating thousands of impressions and high engagement across mommy-blogger networks.
- **Consistent Brand Voice:** Successfully managed diverse influencers to ensure a cohesive "Back to School" narrative while allowing for local provincial flair.

Operational Innovation

- **Solved a Legacy Problem:** Created a functional workaround for a non-unified POS system that had previously prevented national-scale promotions.
- **Low-Friction Management:** Developed a reimbursement system that saw a 100% adoption rate among local shop managers due to its simplicity.

Sustainability Impact

- **Brand Integrity:** Used the recycled gift cards to solidify MCC Thrift's position as a leader in the "Circular Economy," a key talking point that influencers leveraged for organic reach.



03

MCC Thrift - “Road to Reopening” Digital Growth Strategy

The Problem: The Engagement Gap

Traditional charity radiothons often suffer from "donation drop" during music sets.

- **The Challenge:** Historical data showed that while donations spiked during the 4 minutes of on-air talk per hour, engagement dropped to zero during the music segments.
- **The Goal:** We needed to bridge a massive funding gap. We had to move from a previous year's total of \$22,000 to a target that justified a new \$125,000 matching grant.



The Solution: Gamification & Tangible Impact

I redesigned the listener experience by shifting from abstract dollar amounts to a "gamified" real-time feedback loop.

- **Tangible Pricing:** We shifted the call-to-action from "Donate \$20" to "Provide 10 meals." By anchoring the cost of a meal at \$3.11, the donation became a tangible, personal act of service rather than a financial transaction.
- **The "Mario Coin" Gamification:** To solve the engagement gap during music, I instituted a real-time audio trigger. Every time a donation was processed, a "coin collection" sound effect (similar to Super Mario Bros) was played over the air regardless of whether a song or advertisement was playing.
- **The Feedback Loop:** This created an immediate "reward" for the donor and a curiosity spark for other listeners. It turned a passive listening experience into an interactive event.

The Experience: Community Momentum

The "coin dings" became a phenomenon. Listeners began calling in multiple small donations in rapid succession just to hear the "dings" chain together on air. It gave the audience a sense of collective momentum; even during long music breaks, the community knew that impact was happening in real-time.

The Results

Record-Breaking Revenue

- **Exponential Growth:** Shattered previous records, moving from \$22,000 in the prior year to over \$135,000 raised in just three days (over \$260,000 with the donation match).
- **Match Optimization:** Successfully unlocked the full \$125,000 matching grant by maintaining high-velocity donations throughout the entire broadcast.

Market Expansion & Reputation

- **New Business Acquisition:** The unprecedented success of the "Coin Drop" methodology led directly to securing two additional long-term radiothon partnerships with other major organizations, based solely on our demonstrated ROI.
- **Increased Valuation:** Our newfound reputation as a high-performance fundraising partner allowed us to substantially increase our rates for future radiothon contracts, significantly boosting the station's annual revenue.

Behavioral Breakthroughs

- **Listener Retention:** Increased average "Time Spent Listening" (TSL) as the audience stayed tuned in to hear the frequency of donations and participate in the "momentum" of the event.
- **Psychological Shifting:** Proved that by lowering the psychological barrier to entry (the price of a meal) and providing instant feedback (the sound trigger), you can drive significantly higher volume and total revenue.



04

Mythos & Ink - The "Digital-First" Launch – Multi-Platform Event Production

The Problem: Launching in a Borderless Market

As a small, independent publisher, Mythos & Ink needed to create "event-level" excitement for new releases without the budget for a physical book tour.

- **The Challenge:** How do you create an immersive experience for a global audience that feels as intimate and exciting as a live, in-person reading?
- **The Goal:** Build a scalable, digital-first launch model that increases pre-orders and brand loyalty across multiple time zones.



The Solution: Immersive Multimedia Live-Streams

I moved beyond the standard "author talk" to create a high-production, directed live-stream experience.

- **Multi-Location Direction:** I directed and hosted live-streamed launch events that integrated authors, moderators, and fans from multiple geographic locations into a single cohesive broadcast.
- **Content Innovation:** To elevate the storytelling, I created an animated graphic novel experience. I scripted the sequences, directed the animation, and hired/managed professional voice actors to bring the book's characters to life on screen during the event.
- **Live Engagement:** Managed real-time audience interaction, Q&A segments, and digital "swag" giveaways to keep the retention high throughout the 60-90 minute broadcasts.

The Experience: Professionalizing the Independent Author

By providing high-end video elements and a polished "broadcast" feel, we gave independent authors a platform that rivaled major publishing houses. This built deep trust with our creators and provided a unique "entry point" for new readers who were drawn in by the visual and auditory elements of the launch.

The Results

Audience Expansion

- **Global Reach:** Successfully engaged readers across Canada, US, and the UK simultaneously, far exceeding the reach of any physical event.
- **High-Value Assets:** The animated sequences and recorded live-streams were repurposed into long-tail marketing content, continuing to drive sales months after the launch.

Technical Mastery

- **Broadcast Logistics:** Proved the ability to troubleshoot and manage the technical friction of multi-location live-streaming (latency, audio syncing, and platform stability).
- **Creative Resource Management:** Demonstrated the ability to act as a creative director: managing budgets for voice talent and animators while keeping the project on schedule for strict publication dates.

