Joshua G. Townsend

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Seasoned public affairs and policy professional with 15 years' experience. Deep background in policy, crisis and communications at a Fortune 120 in a heavily regulated industry. Key accomplishments include leading a press office, designing narratives and strategies for key reputational and policy initiatives for the entire company, managing media relations for top company topics, and pioneering one of the industry's leading global media events. Currently in NYC; Sacramento relocation by end-2026.

EXPERIENCE

Philip Morris International *(top global tobacco & nicotine company)*

Senior Manager Crisis Management/ Issues & Litigation Communications (New York, NY)

Mar. 2020 to Nov. 2025

Media Relations

- Served as U.S. press contact for a top-growth product line (ZYN, U.S., Jan 2024 to July 2025), responding to media inquiries from top tier outlets including Bloomberg, NBC, and CNN. Led proactive responses to coverage, including misinformation corrections in close collaboration with Litigation, Legal, commercial, Scientific Engagement and other SMEs.
- Led communications for ongoing litigation, totaling over $24B at stake, on 40+ matters. Involved patent disputes with largest competitor, product safety, competition and government-led actions that required clear, accurate explanations of complex policy, regulatory, and technical issues.

Strategic Planning & Content Development

- Designed and deployed the company's inaugural Corporate Reputation program in alignment with Government Affairs, Sustainability, and Communications leadership. Included strategy and KPIs incorporated into Government Affairs annual objectives.
- Built the Communications strategy, global narrative, and press toolkit for our fastest growing product category (nicotine pouch category and propriety product, ZYN), with safety and policy messaging targeted to regulators. Deployed globally to all Comms and Government Affairs teams.

Cross-Functional Leadership

- Headed crisis for U.S. affiliates (2025), R&D and other matters in support of worldwide business on 60+ matters. Output included leading crisis response teams, issue-spotting and external-environment analysis for senior leadership, and coordinating aligned responses to sensitive issues. Also developed comprehensive Crisis guidance for the U.S. shared with local leadership.
- Led U.S. task force for key corporate reputational risk – user-generated content of youth use of ZYN. Role involved defining project strategy, directing agency support, updating cross-functional group and leadership, and coordinating any actions taken.
- Produced Chairman's briefing and Q&A for three straight Annual Shareholders Meetings (2023-25). Comprised all globally-relevant issues that were, or at risk of being, in the public domain. Closely coordinated with Litigation, Government Affairs, Communications and Investor Relations.

Head of Communications, Israel (Tel Aviv, Israel) **Jan. 2019 – Feb. 2020**

- Worked with press agencies and Comms team to cultivate productive relationships with major and niche media. Included routinely sharing updates on local and international developments in the policy space, pitching corporate and third-party stories, and ensuring our positions were accurately reflected in coverage.
- Led coordination of proactive social media communications strategy to educate general public on technological advancements in the industry and importance of responsible regulation. Generated over 4 million interactions and average-time-on-page of 2:09.
- Briefed and trained spokespeople and senior leaders for high-visibility interviews on policy, corporate positions, and product safety talking points.
- Coordinated closely with Scientific Affairs in organizing medical conference attended by over 1200 participants and presentations from four Nobel laureates. Included debate covered by top-tier press between oppositional Health Ministry and points of view in line with corporation position.

Manager Global Communications (Lausanne) **Jan. 2015 – Dec. 2018**

- Led 40 media visits to R&D facilities as corporate spokesperson, translating complex scientific and technical concepts into accessible narratives. Hosted journalists from around the globe, including the Wall Street Journal and El País (Spain).
- Developed one of the company's leading media opportunities to explain technology, safety science, and policy positions to media. The conference to-date has hosted hundreds of journalists from over 50 countries, including interviews with the CEO and C-suite leadership.
- Developed and deployed Communications training around safety science and policy positions on new products globally, including senior leadership. Led several trainings at all levels of the company to teams across the globe, providing real-time feedback for staged press interviews.
- Created the first scientific communication newsletters to inform the press and stakeholders about the company's ongoing developments in safety science in a language understandable to a general audience, in close coordination with R&D, Legal and policy.
- Drafted press releases to promote the company's scientific and corporate developments, including M&A developments and regulatory authorization progress, in alignment with Legal and Investor Relations.

Manager External Affairs (D.C./ Lausanne) **June 2011 – Dec. 2014**

- New Government Affairs role building out resources and coordination globally to support regulatory engagements on new non-combustible category. Included legislative and regulatory tracking and analysis, stakeholder mapping of key opinion leaders, outreach resources, coordinating Government Affairs actions across dozens of markets, supporting specific needs of affiliates, and developing policy backgrounders and messaging for local teams. Involved pioneering creation of a Scientific Engagement team to reach Key Scientific Opinion Leaders.

EDUCATION

***American University Washington College of Law*, J.D.** (State Bar of California, inactive) **May 2011**

***University of California, Santa Cruz*, Bachelor of Arts in U.S. History** **May 2005**