




## Bernessa M. Wilson

Global Marketing Executive – Multiple Industries

 <https://bernessawilson.com/>

An experienced global marketing executive, Bernessa has worked across multiple industries and channels and led various marketing disciplines in large and small multibillion-dollar companies as an officer and consultant. She specializes in Marketing Communications, Strategy, Branding, and restructuring or building high-performing marketing teams. She has created and executed global marketing strategies and customer, market, and competitive insights to help launch products, brands, portfolios, digital, and merger & acquisition initiatives. Bernessa develops and executes successful go-to-market strategies and integrated marketing, digital, and communications plans from concept to execution. In addition, she is a C-Level influencer and team champion that builds consensus and inspires key stakeholders while strategically navigating an organization.

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### EXPERTISE

Marketing Communications (Global)		Marketing Strategy		Brand Development		Channel & Integrative Marketing		NPD Commercialization	
B2B & B2C	Brand Building	Budget Forecasting & Management			Advertising	Integrated Marketing		Website, Social & Digital Marketing	
Market Insights	C-Level Influencer	Creation of Selling Tools		PR/Crisis Communications		Tradeshow   Events		P & L Management	
Media Planning & Buying		Market Research & Reporting (i.e., CRC, Technomic, Datassential, Mintel, IBIS)					Employee Development		SEO   SEM

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Vice President of Marketing, Communications & Research**      **Illinois Mutual Insurance Co., Peoria, IL**      **October 2021 – Present**  
*\$500M Mutual Life Insurance Company is a premier provider of life insurance, disability insurance, and voluntary worksite benefits.*

#### UPSTANDING MARKETING – LEADERSHIP & TEAMBUILDING

- Built, develop, and manage a high-performing and collaborative Marketing, Communications, and Research (MCR) Team of 20 that collectively defines and communicates the Illinois Mutual brand across all channels. Responsible for connecting people to our services and products through marketing messaging, research, strategic insights, product development and management, channel and distribution expansion, and internal communications.
- Develop and implement a marketing strategy and operational plan that creates and drives product and brand messaging, go-to-market initiatives, and product portfolio launch offerings by channel and/or distribution.
- A marketing team whose major activities and functions consist of Research & Insights, Brand and Product Communications Planning/Media Buying/Creative Development, Product Management, Distributor Recruitment, Internal & External Communications, Graphic & Website Development and Optimization, and Reporting & Analytics.
- Serve as an officer of the company partnering with top executives across the organization in sales, claims, policy, legal, customer service, and finance to implement goals and objectives with specific KPIs and metrics that align with the corporate strategy and financial goals.

#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND DISTRIBUTOR RECRUITMENT – CUSTOMER PROSPECTS & CONVERSION

- Generate 1040 (YTD) new agent leads through MCR recruitment activity by driving targeted product-specific marketing campaigns with a 25% conversion rate of qualified leads.
- Targeted media spending and the inclusion of new platforms and channels within our media mix.
- Purchase individual state license lists and targeting.
- Segmenting both the consumer and agent audiences by product portfolio strategies by channel.
- Increasing focus on Nurture Campaigns for each product portfolio line to increase engagement while revisiting warm leads within our CRM platform.

#### PRODUCT PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT – CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT & SALES SUPPORT

- Increase engagement with existing customers to grow profitability and same-store sales by creating new sales tools, concepts, webinars, and resources.
- Targeting existing agents via all social platforms and targeted marketing campaigns with a click-through rate of 6.5% and an average email open rate of 23% YOY.
- Responsible for packaging IL Mutual's marketing objectives, market opportunities, and portfolio offerings into a formal, cohesive go-to-market plan that includes defining and prioritizing the voice of customer (VOC) and distributor when implementing portfolio and product launches. This ensures that sales and marketing are completely aligned and drive measurable sales growth.

## MARCOM, GRAPHICS, AND WEBSITE METRICS – BUILD BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND ENGAGEMENT

- Provide marketing communications, assets, and research directly impacting the receipt of 6,800 paid applications from existing Disability Income and Life distributors.
- Increase Brand Awareness and Brand Engagement by creating and [executing a social media strategy](#) that achieves 8.5% Facebook, 19% Instagram, 5% on Twitter (new account), and 6.7% LinkedIn increase in engagement rates YOY.
- [Leverage customer insights](#) and oversee internal and external agencies that create compelling and consistent content and messaging across channels (web, social, email, direct mail, text, digital, and print) for higher engagement and conversion rates.
- Execute [SEO and web strategy to achieve 48,000 organic website visitors](#).

## RESEARCH, ANALYTICS, AND INSIGHTS - CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS AND METRICS

- Responsible for research, analytics, interviews, and surveys that include customer, competitor, and industry insights, buyer personas, and illustrations. It also provides metrics for [messaging effectiveness](#), search and recruitment [campaign response rates](#), [engagement](#), [conversions](#), sales opportunities, [gaps within the organization](#), and opportunities for customer service improvements.

## DISTRIBUTOR AWARENESS & PERCEPTION TRAINING INITIATIVE

- Partner with sales to create and launch a training platform and "How To" videos to educate distributors and equip them with the tools to successfully sell Illinois Mutual Disability Income and Worksite products while [increasing engagement and brand awareness by 35% YOY](#).

**Head of Marketing (Global)      Prince Castle, a Marmon/ Berkshire Hathaway Co., Carol Stream, IL      May 2016 – September 2021**  
*\$1.5B Global manufacturer of commercial food & beverage equipment and supplies for QSR, C-Store, FSR, Café/Bakery, Hotel & Catering Industries.*

**UPSTANDING MARKETING** – Built a comprehensive strategic marketing strategy for the \$2B Food Service Sector that reframed the Role of Marketing within the organization and covered four brands (Prince Castle, Silver King, Saber King, and Angelo Po Americas.)

- **Leadership:** Built, managed, and mentored a highly motivated, high-performing marketing team of 8 while creating and managing all cross-organizational marketing priorities for Prince Castle, Silver King, Angelo Po Americas, and Saber King brands. [Managed a \\$3.6M marketing budget](#).
- **Brand Development and Brand Building:** Audited and refreshed the entire house of brands. Championed the launch of new brand assets that included logos, brand guidelines, brand story, and branded messaging (both internally and externally).
- **Digital and Social Media Marketing:** Established strategic digital marketing and social media strategies [that have increased engagement YOY between 35% - 55% in 2018, 2019, and 2020](#) and implemented an SEO strategy that increased website traffic by 65% with improved page rankings and [landing page conversion rates by 22%](#).
- **Strategic Market Insight:** Outlined the marketplace, trends, competition, place, proposition, product segmentation, range architecture, and pricing strategies via various channels.
- **Creation of Selling Toolkit:** Improved sales and business development teams' selling assets on all brands and products.

**GROWTH** – Developed Product Category Strategies and New Product Development (NPD) Pipeline [for Sustainable Growth, delivering 3%-5% revenue growth YOY](#).

- Developed a [comprehensive New Product Development \(NPD\) pipeline and launch plan](#) following the [commercialization process](#).
- Lead workstreams to understand Voice of Customer (VOC) and competitive assessments across all food equipment products resulting in new product development while [allowing growth into adjacent markets with an estimated \\$30M potential](#).
- Outlined marketplace, trends, competition, place, proposition, product segmentation, range architecture, and pricing strategies.

**OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE** – Drove Continuous Improvement and Simplification.

- Developed "MFT IQ," an in-depth [product training tool for the sales team to improve product knowledge](#) and [support cross-selling products](#) across multiple brands.

**INCREASE BRAND RECOGNITION** – Developed Robust and Diverse Communications and Digital Marketing Plan.

- Championed critical milestones by positioning Marmon's Foodservice Sector by [creating a strategic marketing plan and launching various foodservice brands externally](#): including brand guides, websites, social media platforms, brand brochures, social conversation, and media calendars.

**INNOVATION** – Improved Competitive Position by Listening to Voice of Customer (VOC).

- [Identified key customers and market needs](#) to inform product strategies and identify innovation platforms for each product category.
- Assessed value proposition of product features and led engineering and sales initiatives.
- Identified [product opportunities](#) by leveraging [Voice of Customer \(VOC\) research](#) and implementing actions to [improve competitive position](#).
- [Created clear access and data](#) for the voice of the customer that the leadership team can easily use.

## Marketing Communications Manager US, Mexico & Canada

Roquette, Geneva, IL

April 2012 – January 2015

\$4.5B global leader in plant-based ingredients, a pioneer of plant proteins, and a leading provider of pharmaceutical excipients.

Implemented and launched all marketing, communications, and brand strategies for the Human Health & Nutrition, Pharmaceutical/ Nutraceutical, and Industrial business units in the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. A C-Level influencer and marketing leader responsible for all branding, creative/content, design, web and digital marketing, advertisement, social media conversation calendar, promotional, and events planning. Enhanced open rate for digital campaigns by 48%. Created an SEM strategy revamping our website by creating key content both on the website pages and in the URLs to drive traffic to landing pages and increase engagement from new recruitment campaigns, resulting in a 25-28% conversion rate.

## Marketing Manager

Packer Engineering, Naperville, IL

May 2005 – April 2011

\$75M Engineering firm specializing in various centers of excellence (i.e., mechanical, metallurgy, aerospace, electrical, etc.).

Created a successful marketing strategy that built brand awareness, consistently strengthening market share, revenue, and competitive advantage for various business units (aviation, mechanical, electrical, chemical, metallurgy, etc.) via multiple channels. Oversaw various marketing projects, including social media, literature (i.e., white papers, articles, collateral, direct mail pieces, and signage), website management, media development (print/digital), and corporate newsletters.

## Marketing Coordinator/Events Manager

PepsiCo, Chicago, IL

May 2004 – May 2005

\$67B multinational food and beverage company ranking as one of the largest companies worldwide.

Served as the key marketing liaison for national marketing teams, field sales, and bottler organizations while supporting the Marketing Director and the Central Regional team for PepsiAmericas. Led the PepsiAmericas regional advertisement and promotional calendar that included: events planning, creative and content design, and channel marketing initiatives. In addition, develop integrated marketing programs that support the company's strategic plans for Mountain Dew, Pepsi, Cherry Pepsi, and Sierra Mist brands, representing 20% of US volume and \$12 Billion in annual sales.

## Marketing Communications Manager

RR Donnelley Logistics, Willowbrook, IL

April 2001 – May 2004

\$6.2 billion American Fortune 500 integrated communications company provides business communications, commercial printing, and logistics.

Implemented and launched marketing, communications, and brand strategies for the logistics business. A C-Level influencer and marketing leader responsible for developing and executing a comprehensive strategic national integrated marketing program for a logistics company that partnered with the United States Postal Service to launch RR Donnelley Logistics' Express Direct Mail Service, a SaaS app. Launched the initial campaign, "Finding Money in the Mail," which resulted in a \$1.25M increase in revenue—developed and managed integrated marketing communications that increased brand awareness in the marketplace, resulting in 36% growth over two years. In addition, managed upgrades to the company website, ensuring all updates drove toward building brand equity for the SaaS product.

## EDUCATION

BA, Marketing, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

## AFFILIATIONS

ANA Member  
(Association of National Advertisers)

## SKILLS

MS Office 365 Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, SharePoint), Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Spark, Acrobat, Bridge), Product Blueprint Mapping, Website Management (WordPress, Drupal, Tiger), SEO and CRM Solutions & Management (Google AdWords/Yahoo Search/Microsoft Ad, Salesforce.com, HubSpot, Pivotal, MS Dynamics), Business Analytics, Webinar Applications (WebEx, Live Meetings, etc.), Social Media Platforms & Dashboards (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Snap Chat, LinkedIn, Hootsuite, Bitly, etc.), Digital Marketing (Campaign Monitor, Mailchimp Constant Contact) Accounting (SAP & PeopleSoft), HTML formatting, Flash, Communications Planning, Photo & Video shoot creation & onsite management and Video Editing. Managing External Vendors: Creative Agencies, Industry Tradeshow Events Management, Web/Digital Partners, etc.)

## INTERESTS & ACTIVITIES

Northern Illinois Food Bank Executive Women's Council Member	2019 – Present
Northern Illinois Food Bank Volunteer	2014 – Present
LifeSpring Shelter for Women Mentor & Finance Teacher	2007-Present
Chicago Cares Volunteer and Philanthropist	2004-Present
Chicago Distant Classic Marathon Finisher	2007