

919-475-9997 | Ben.kimmel@gmail.com

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/benjaminkimmel/> | <https://ben-kimmel.com/>

Professional Summary

Strategic communications leader with 15+ years developing integrated campaigns and stakeholder engagement strategies across technical, financial, and institutional sectors. Proven expertise in cross-functional team leadership, workshop facilitation, and coaching speakers in effective message delivery.

Professional Experience

Assistant Director, Digital Communications

Duke University Communications & Marketing | November 2021 – Present

Lead integrated marketing and communications strategy for high-profile university initiatives, partnering with academic leadership, researchers, and institutional stakeholders to translate complex institutional priorities into compelling public narratives.

Strategic Campaign Leadership:

- Developed and executed major integrated campaigns including Duke Centennial (18-month celebration), Climate Commitment (Presidential Award winner), and Strategic Vision launch, creating roadmaps for content across multiple media channels
- Managed campaign lifecycles from strategic planning through implementation, coordinating cross-functional teams and external vendors

Stakeholder Communication & Coaching:

- Translate complex research, policy, and institutional priorities into accessible messages for media, donors, alumni, and public
- Facilitate strategic planning sessions and guide university members in refining message delivery, tone, and presentation dynamics for maximum impact

Process Innovation:

- Drive continuous improvement initiatives using data analysis and emerging technologies to optimize audience engagement and message retention
- Implement workflow efficiencies that enhance team productivity and campaign effectiveness

VP and Senior UX Designer

Truist Bank (formerly BB&T and SunTrust) | 2020 - November 2021

Led Experience Design strategy for Commercial Banking during major bank merger, focusing on client retention and new product development.

- Created strategic roadmaps for customer experience enhancements during organizational transition
- Collaborated with diverse stakeholders to align user experience with business objectives and technology capabilities

UX Design Lead, Senior Information Architect

Fidelity Investments | 2013 – 2019

Specialized in translating complex financial concepts into user-friendly experiences for diverse plan participant audiences, leading cross-functional teams to deliver industry-leading solutions.

Strategic Communication & Design:

- Communicated intricate financial benefits and retirement planning concepts to participants with varying levels of financial literacy
- Led UX teams in creating user-focused experiences that simplified complex information without sacrificing accuracy
- Collaborated with product, sales, marketing, and leadership teams to align design solutions with business objectives

Workshop Facilitation & Training:

- Designed and facilitated Design Thinking workshops and strategic visioning sessions for internal teams
- Developed training programs that improved cross-departmental collaboration and strategic alignment
- Mentored early-career professionals and initiated HBCU design program pipeline

Information Architect and UX Designer

Duke University | 2007 – 2012

Focused on digital communications structure and usability research while collaborating with university communications, external agencies, and diverse academic partners. Conducted Design Thinking workshops and served as university representative at strategic planning initiatives.

Leadership & Board Experience

Board President

North Carolina Songwriter's Co-op | 2016 – 2024

Led strategic planning and organizational development for the state's largest nonprofit songwriter organization.

- Developed and implemented membership growth strategies, successfully expanding and diversifying participation and improving organizational sustainability
- Coordinated live performance experiences, managing talent, sound production, and venue partnerships

Venue Manager

Full Frame Documentary Film Festival | 2004 – 2018

Managed operations for the largest venue at this annual 4-day documentary festival, coordinating complex scheduling and logistics for high-profile documentary screenings and events.

Developed volunteer retention strategies that maintained qualified staff across multiple festival seasons.

Professional Development & Speaking

Conference Leadership: Program Curator (IA Conference 2019), Program Committee & Presenter (EdUi 2009-2012), Presenter (HighEdWeb 2009, IA Summit 2008)

Core Competencies

Strategic Communication: Campaign development, message strategy, stakeholder alignment

Complex Information Translation: Technical, financial, and academic content for diverse audiences | **Workshop Facilitation:** Design Thinking, strategic visioning, cross-functional collaboration | **Team Leadership:** Cross-functional coordination, mentoring, process improvement | **Presentation Coaching:** Message refinement, delivery optimization, audience engagement | **Data-Driven Strategy:** Analytics integration, performance optimization, continuous improvement

Education

Bachelor of Arts, Theater Studies

Warren Wilson College | 1991

Community Engagement

Current & Recent Service: Book Harvest Volunteer (2013-Present), Home Page Program Universal Broadband Coordinator (2020-2021), North Carolina Symphony Digital Task Force (2017-2021), American Red Cross Platelet Donor (2004-2023)