



Doing the Right Thing

2021 Sustainability Report

WRIGHT
COMMUNICATIONS



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The Wright Way

2021 has been another tough but rewarding year where we served our community and really led with purpose beyond profit. COVID-19 has been disruptive, but the agency has soldiered on and retained its Auckland-based team throughout.



We've won a raft of clients seeking our specialist, sustainability strategic planning and story-telling skills. This shows that the COVID-19 pandemic doesn't appear to have stifled many organisations' desire to improve their social and environmental sustainability performance – and be recognised for their efforts.

We were beyond excited and proud to be recognised for our efforts, too, as PRINZ named us the Consultancy of the Year in the Medium/ Large category for the second time in a row, a real morale boost for the team.

We have been providing full-service communications support to a wide range of organisations, from New Zealand companies to multinational, local government bodies and charitable organisations.

Many of these clients have sought our guidance in recent months on how best to communicate the great work they're doing, among them Toitū Tahua – the Centre for Sustainable Finance, the Responsible Investment Association of

Australasia (RIAA), Glad – for its ocean plastics campaign, Signature Homes and The Aotearoa Circle for its Mana Kai National Food Roadmap. The team has also worked on sustainability reports for EnviroNZ and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise.

At the heart of it, Wright Communications remains an agency based on our core values of Genuine Connections, Delivering Exciting Work, Having Each Other's Back and Doing the Right Thing. Coupled with an unwavering commitment to our niche in sustainability communications, these values guide our behaviour and thinking. Our culture sets us apart and opens the door for a diverse range of work.

Part of our credo is to give back – purpose beyond profit – and the team has made a significant contribution in its work for charities over the recent lockdowns, providing a lot of pro bono and after-hours support for our not-for-profit clients like Presbyterian Support Northern and Surf Life Saving Northern Region.

“Sustainability has been a passion since I set up the agency 15 years ago and it is a huge motivation for us as a team to assist our clients in (ahem) doing the Wright thing”

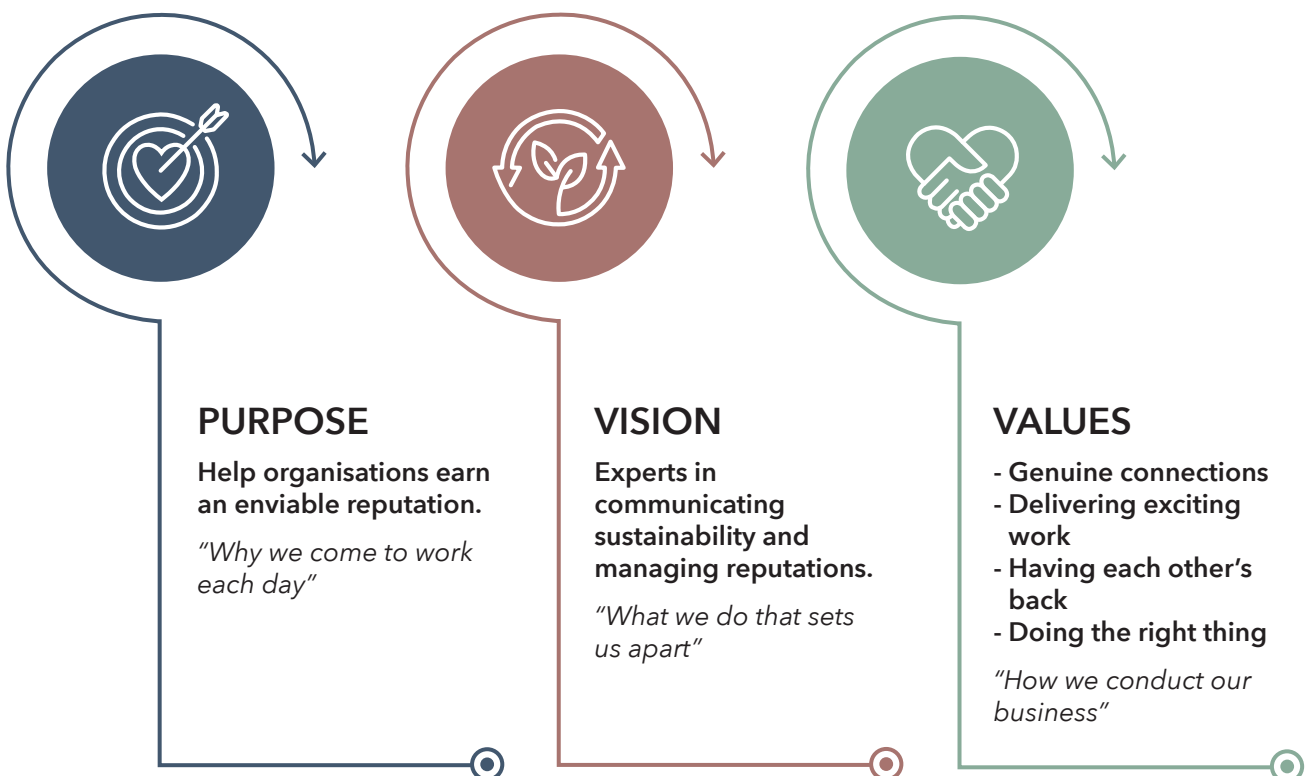
All of this reflects how sustainability is a huge motivation for us as a team to assist our clients - excuse the terrible pun - in doing the Wright thing. We "walk the talk" too: our net promotion score, measuring client satisfaction, remains rock-solid, and along with Toitū carbon certification we are now actively seeking B-Corp certification. B-Corp is the only certification that measures a company's entire social and environmental performance, encompassing public transparency, legal accountability to balance profit and purpose, and the impact of a company's business model on its workers, the community, environment, and customers.

On a personal level, as a business owner, I am hugely grateful to have been able to hold the team together through another tumultuous year, a true testament to the team's resilience and dedication. I am grateful, too for our loyal clients, and am optimistic the coming year will be bright.



Nikki Wright
Managing Director
Wright Communications

THE WRIGHT WAY



What Matters Most

Towards the end of this year, we conducted a virtual materiality assessment with our internal and external stakeholders to identify the material topics that impact our business and our working lives. We also discussed the impact we, as a team, have on the environment and the community.

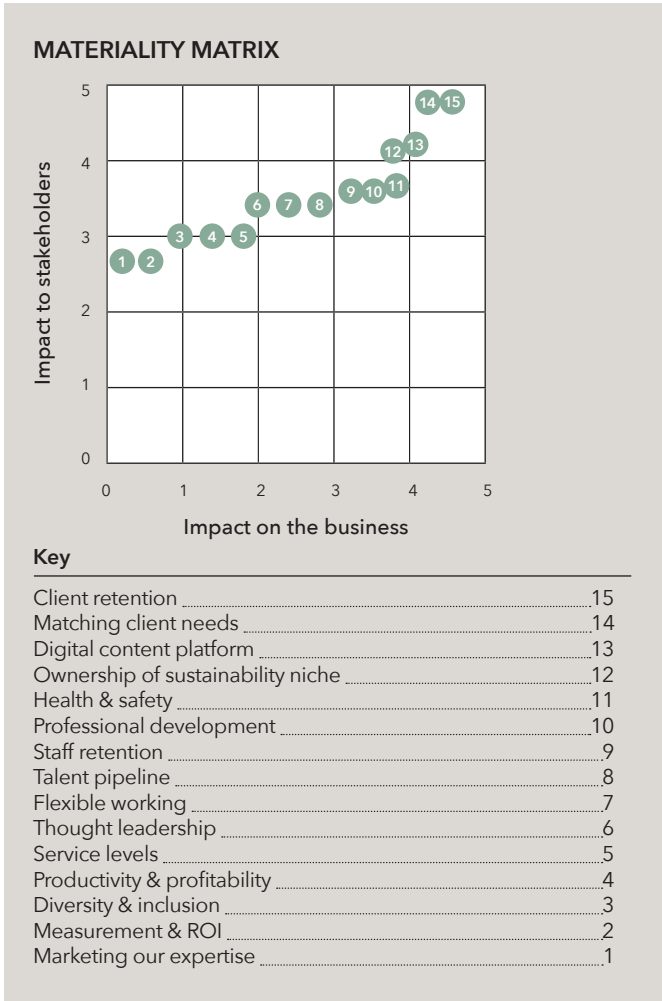
The subsequent list of material topics was used to guide the content of this Sustainability Report. We have chosen to structure this Report on the top six material topics.

With another year of business interruption, lockdowns, and stress on business and personal relationships because of the uncertainties of COVID-19, it was clear that our most significant material issue again for 2021 was matching our services to client needs and client retention.

Our second highest topic was ownership of the sustainability niche in the public relations sector. This is where Wright Communications set itself apart from its competitors early on, and it has become increasingly important for many of our clients over the past 15 years. During that time, we have worked with some of New Zealand's largest businesses on projects including corporate social responsibility strategies, community investment reviews, sustainability reports and materiality assessments.

It's a drawcard to Wright Communications for many, but now there are others claiming expertise in this field.

The growth in digital content platforms also emerged as a key topic. This has been an important topic for PR agencies for several years and continues to gain traction as we expand our



service offering to cater for a growing demand for social media campaigns in addition to traditional media campaigns in broadcast and print channels. An increasing number of digital media platforms have emerged and and previously published titles have gone digital-only.

With COVID-19 front-and-centre, the health and safety of our staff, clients and visiting suppliers has come into focus. Professional development is a perennial topic that requires constant management. In such a tight talent market, retention of staff is also a material topic.

Our top material topics in 2021 were:

- 1 = Matching client needs
- 1 = Client retention
- 2 = Digital content platforms
- 2 = Ownership of sustainability niche
- 3 = Health & Safety
- 3 = Professional Development
- 3 = Staff retention

Aligning with UN Sustainable Development Goals

Wright Communications has moved beyond merely mapping to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. We now focus on meaningfully relating these goals to our business strategy in order to use them to build our organisation's sustainability culture. We've taken our values and material topics and committed to some tangible, real-life targets that relate to the SDGs. These are reflected in the following diagram, and throughout this report as targets are related to each of our topics.

"One of the biggest issues facing the PR industry is gender equality and the lockdowns in 2021 made this challenging to address with our mentoring programme of AUT students temporarily suspended."



Key Targets and Updates as Mapped Against SDGs

SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing

- Develop a staff policy that includes flexible working, diversity and inclusion.
- **Completed ✓**

SDG 4: Quality Education

- Develop career pathway plans collaboratively for all consultants. These have been completed for all consultants that celebrated the anniversary of their employment with Wright Communications during the year.
- Create an Induction Process and supporting templates.
- **Completed ✓**

SDG 5: Gender Equality

- Gender Equality - Address the gender imbalance through mentoring of AUT third year PR students to balance representation of males and females, encouraging younger males into the profession.
- *On track, requires significant time and industry-wide collaboration.*

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

- Become the go-to PR agency for sustainability over time by growing this area of the business by 10 per cent.
- **Achieved ✓**

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

- Develop a Sustainable Procurement Policy.
- **Completed ✓**

SDG 13: Climate Action

- Work with Toitū to develop an emissions management plan and develop 3-5-year targets.
- **Completed ✓**



Matching Services to Client Needs and Client Retention

Stakeholders have told us they think it is critical that our service offering aligns to what our clients want to buy from us. There is steady demand for our traditional services like communications planning, media relations, issues management as well as our special areas of expertise - sustainability reporting and storytelling.

Some consumer-facing brands, however, are increasingly accessing our newer services like social media influencer marketing. Other clients are looking to communicate information using more dynamic tools such as infographics and video content. Wright Communications has attracted new talent to its team in the last 12 months where these new tools are second nature

to our consultants, giving us the opportunity to market these new service offerings to our existing clients.

Another area of growth this year has been in the procurement of sponsored content on behalf of clients. This is not instead of traditional earned-media pitching but in addition to it, and tends to be reserved for times when our clients want to make a major splash. In fact, we are hearing from certain clients that they are looking to use a PR-first approach. This is an exciting time to work in PR and jump to the head of the queue for creative ideation and media planning.

Client retention, an equally important topic, is one of the stand-out achievements of the firm and an ongoing challenge. We pride ourselves on understanding client needs, the value we add, and the deep relationships of mutual trust and respect that have been created.

Our clients have been incredibly loyal to us and they enjoy their depth of connection with their account directors at Wright. We choose to largely operate a retainer model –alongside undertaking key projects – meaning we can afford to be proactive. While we operate a sliding scale of charge-out rates for most clients and services, we offer a flat rate of \$140/hour for all public-sector and non-profit organisations.

Wright Communications has 19 monthly retainer clients. Three resigned us during lockdown in March 2020 and we won two during the year, so in January 2021 we were one retainer down on January 2020.

Seven of these retainer clients have stayed with the consultancy for five years or more, including:

✓ Toyota	13 years
✓ Lexus	13 years
✓ Wainhouse Distribution	13 years
✓ Colmar Brunton	10 years
✓ Presbyterian Support Northern	8 years
✓ Environmental Choice	7 years
✓ Surf Life Saving Northern Region	6 years

While we operate a sliding scale of charge-out rates for most clients and services, we offer a flat rate of \$140/hour for all non-profit organisations.



We’re incredibly proud of our 13-year PR relationship with Toyota New Zealand and relish our status of trusted advisor to CEO Neeraj Lala.



Our PR advice to Environmental Choice New Zealand spans seven years; giving Kiwis guidance on environmentally preferable products.



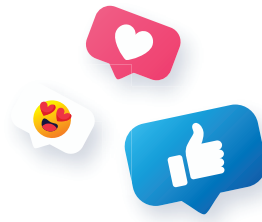
For six years we’ve helped spread beach safety and drowning prevention messages in the media on behalf of Surf Lifesaving Northern Region.

Digital Content Platforms

If lockdowns have taught us anything, it's that we live in an increasingly digital world. This creates demand for brands, companies and charities to communicate and engage with their stakeholders in a digital environment.

Some of our clients have highly sophisticated digital marketing while for others there is patchy use of digital assets and platforms. Certain clients are evolving their e-commerce offerings while others may be yet to establish a social media presence. We meet clients where they are at in their digitalisation journey and support them as required to grow their online audience and community - whether it's to educate, inform, inspire, or even fund-raise.

While we are not digital marketers per se, we do need to continuously evolve our skill-sets and be proficient at social media strategy, copywriting and post design, video content development and captioning, social media influencer marketing and reporting. What we find incredibly satisfying about digital communications is the ability to prove the ROI for clients. Whether its sticker taps, click-throughs, engagement, unique web visitors, shares, or funds raised we can transparently provide the data to inform the further enhancement of the campaign in a timely manner.



Ownership of the Sustainability Niche

Since its inception in 2006, Wright Communications has partnered with leaders in sustainability and helped them craft their story. These are the kind of stories that matter to us.

In 2021 we have worked alongside owners of famous global and local brands as they took their sustainability strategies and initiatives deeper and deeper into their business operations, production and supply chains.

When a company such as Unilever sets about removing plastics from its value chain or introduces a four-day working week, you have evidence that the corporate world is accelerating its attempt to reduce its environmental footprint or address societal needs.

Many of our clients are taking the lead on climate action, freshwater improvement, plant-based foods and environmentally-responsible construction. During 2021 we worked with Toyota, Unilever, EnviroNZ, Glad and Toitū - to name a few - to tell their positive stories of sustainable action.

We also dedicate our time, effort and public

relations and strategic communications expertise to support the not-for-profit sector.

In the past year we're proud to have provided our storytelling skills to causes that we care about, and to have served the community with heavily discounted professional fees for those working on campaigns that strengthen the fabric of our society, environment and cultural diversity.

At Wright Communications we provide strategic PR services at reduced rates for organisations that strengthen the fabric of our society. In 2021, we were privileged to provide strategic communications management to charities working on the following missions for the betterment of New Zealand:

- Dry-July
- Surf Life Saving Northern Region
- Shine and Lifeline
- Pure Advantage
- Environmental Choice NZ
- The Aotearoa Circle
- Mercy Hospice
- The Hearing House

This year the consultancy has contributed \$150,000 to charitable storytelling. We are confident that our commitment and experience in the sustainability space will ensure we continue to be THE "go-to" agency for sustainability communications in this country in 2022 and beyond.

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The
Aotearoa
Circle



PureAdvantage™



SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING

Increasingly organisations are being required to report on a wide range of sustainability issues – from impact on climate change and energy use to gender pay gaps and human slavery in their supply chain. At the same time, the number of possible frameworks or standards to use for sustainability reports is proliferating.

In avoiding a rigid, cookie-cutter report for every client, Wright Communications guides its clients through the multiple options for reporting and creates structured roadmaps that provide a clear route to introduce sustainability reporting and thinking into an organisation. Each report is unique and authentic to the client's company. In the last 12 months, Wright Communications has penned sustainability reports for a large range of clients.

Over the last decade, a range of insightful reports have been produced for retailers, manufacturers, primary producers, energy companies and technology businesses. Our expertise has expanded from the GRI Standards to the Integrated Reporting framework and we now use either (or a combination of both) depending on the client's strategic approach to annual reporting.

Closer to home, it does feel as though some sustainability gains in the New Zealand marketplace have been eroded, such as increased use of packaging to provide food safety, the inability to use reusable cups for



coffee at cafes under lockdown, and reduced use of public transport because of perceived health risks or possibly financial hardship.

On the positive side, carbon emissions have reduced significantly from the reduction in air travel and car usage.

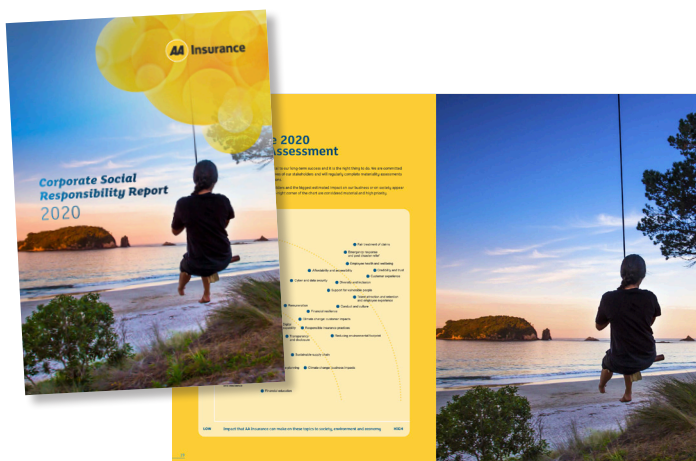
There is no doubt business is currently prioritising economic recovery, but in our experience companies are not turning off the tap on sustainability projects. Those projects are inextricably linked to future economic prosperity.

Whether a business is just starting out or strengthening its focus on sustainability, we're committed to supporting our clients at every step of the journey.

Our corporate team has been flat-out, with new work in the sustainability reporting area for 2degrees, AA Insurance, EnviroNZ, Foodstuffs NZ, NZTE, and Synlait, whose 2021 Sustainability Report is extremely comprehensive – probably the most comprehensive one we have tackled and an exemplar amongst its NZX top 50 peers.

The team have also embarked on various in-depth materiality assessments for clients such as EnviroNZ and NZTE this year - finding out what matters to their organisations and stakeholders through stakeholder interviews and desktop research.

During the year we also helped The Aotearoa Circle and Toitū Envirocare with a wide range of communications activities.



Health and Safety

The day-to-day work life at Wright Communications values a healthy environment that stimulates staff and that fits with their values as people.

There is a fresh-fruit delivery every Monday, eco-cleaning products are used on the office's surface areas and for hand washing, and we have a supply of meditation cushions for those that wish to take a mental health break during the working day.

The wellbeing of our team is the number one priority for our founder and Managing Director Nikki Wright. The novelty of lockdown life well and truly wore off in 2021 and the general mood this time around was less upbeat.

The challenge was how to maintain productivity but provide more flexibility around hours of work to meet other demands on our team's time.

Luckily, all team members are able to work from home, ours being a straight-forward office-based business, but there is no denying it is hard and a compromise.

For some it meant working from a dining table or sharing work space with other members of their

family or flat. For others it meant juggling childcare and home-schooling.

While it has been tough, the business has been quick to share information that will keep team members safe, from vaccine information, stretches to do at your desk, through to weekly sessions, called Diamond & Coal, where we could talk freely with our colleagues about our highs and lows to support our mental health. There were also treats sent to the team to try and keep their spirits up.

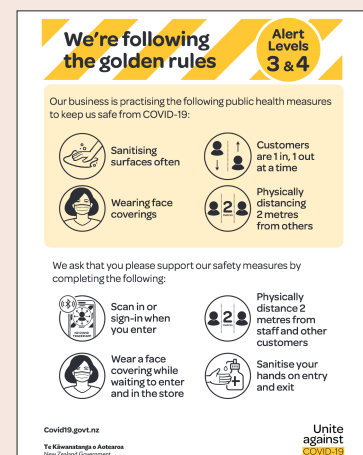
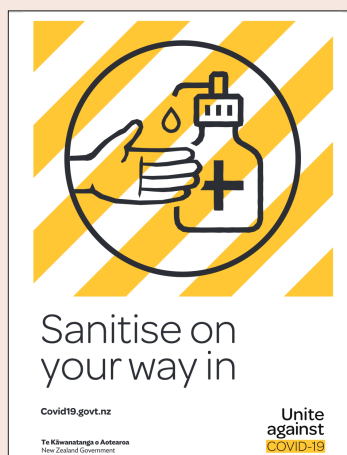
We rallied around supporting charities together with their fundraising efforts and using our PR skills for good deeds which definitely gave us all a morale boost.

With the business being in lockdown for more than three months from mid-August it was critical to support the team in working from home safely.

Any visits to the office had to follow strict health and safety procedures with hand sanitiser use, face masks, distancing and QR code tracing.

We also held a "Duvet Day" in October – a paid day off – as a thank you from the company for the team's hard work during lockdown.

New health and safety protocols have been implemented in our Shortland Street office.





Professional Development

Our people are the lifeblood of the business and their personal and professional satisfaction is just as important as that of our clients.

They are an experienced, dedicated group with a comprehensive and diverse range of skills. This structure makes for a stimulating, collaborative culture internally, which also delivers value to clients.

All consultants at Wright Communications are given paid memberships to the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand (PRINZ) to provide free access to the Continuing Professional Development programme.

The PRINZ Code of Ethics is prominently displayed for internal and external awareness. This is a

critical document for our consultancy as it underpins our role as professional advisors, one we take very seriously.

During the course of the year team members participate in a range of webinars and online events to increase their competency against the industry's body of knowledge. Additionally, several of our senior practitioners host online learning sessions for other industry participants or contribute to webinar panels and mentoring of younger practitioners.

All employees have comprehensive Job Descriptions developed in line with the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA) professional framework, and at their annual performance review a career pathway is discussed to enable career advancement at Wright Communications. Any identified skills gaps will be plugged with training on the job or via an external provider.

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Public
Relations
Institute of
New Zealand



Staff Retention

Our team's personal and professional satisfaction are as important as client satisfaction. Retaining key staff is important as it provides continuity of service to our valued clients and a stable working environment for our team members.

Unlike agencies with high numbers of junior staff and frequent turnover, ours is an experienced, dedicated group with a comprehensive range of skills.

Today, our core consulting team numbers 10 highly talented people with two support workers in office management and finance. In 2019 and 2020, despite the impacts of COVID-19, our consultant retention rate was 100%. In 2021 we had minimal turnover with two junior staff moving on to larger agencies who actively poached them, undoubtedly recognising the excellent training they received at Wright. Sadly, one of our senior consultants moved on after four years of excellent service to an in-house role working on the housing crisis in New Zealand, an opportunity to help solve a pressing social issue through a communications lens that she couldn't turn down. All of these roles were replaced with consultants who were

excited to join Wright Communications and contribute positively to our supportive culture.

The consultancy comprises eight women and four men. Average age is 45, with good gender diversity at the senior consulting level including a female leader at the helm.

We're egalitarian and do not operate a typical hierarchy. Our consultants are "senior doers" and regularly collaborate on creative ideas and problem-solving with their peers and clients.

We strive to create a healthy and encouraging environment that stimulates staff and reflects their values through flexible hours and work location. Our Flexible Working Policy has become an invaluable guiding document for our team, especially during lockdown.

Our people are recognised for their work, both professionally and personally, through our peer-nominated Reward & Recognition programme which sees one lucky team member receive a \$200 restaurant or spa voucher at the start of each month.

Our Values



Making genuine connections



Delivering exciting work



Having each other's back



Doing the right thing

NEW TEAM MEMBERS:

During 2021 we welcomed three new team members to the Wright whānau.



Amelia Cairns
Senior Account Director



Harry Willis
Account Manager



Nicki Pearce
Office Manager and PA to the Managing Director



We enjoy a positive team culture which aides staff retention. On Mondays we discuss priorities for the week ahead at a team “WIPuccino” (the business buys everyone a coffee or similar in recycled cups). At Thursday’s “Diamond and Coal” debriefing sessions, positive client feedback is taken out of our “Jar of Awesome” and read aloud. The feedback is then posted on our “Wall of WOW” for all team members to see.

Performance-based remuneration is reviewed annually with client satisfaction and staff feedback considered. We pay our interns and office cleaners the official Living Wage.

Our values underpin our workplace culture, opening the door to a diverse range of work and a happy and productive team. The result is a stimulating, collaborative environment, and optimal outcomes for clients.

We are pleased to stay connected to many of our alumni, some of whom have contributed testimonials of their time working at Wright Communications.

I joined Wright Communications because I knew it was in the business of helping people do the right thing. I loved working with the incredibly professional, dedicated, and talented team and the opportunity to become an extension to our clients’ teams and work with them at a strategic level. Those are the values that Wright shares and that comes through every day in every way.



Melanie McKay
Public Affairs and
Communications Manager, EMA

Sustainability Matters

OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Under the Toitū Envirocare carbonzero programme, Wright Communications has been verified carbon neutral for the fourth consecutive year in 2021 and purchased 11 gold standard credits to offset the unavoidable emissions associated with our business activity.

We reduced our footprint by 32% from our base-year total of 15.39 tCO₂e. However, we also had three months-plus in lockdown so there was limited car use, zero air travel and reduced electricity usage for air-conditioning and heating. We need to keep thinking of innovative ways to reduce our carbon emissions.



Reporting under Toitū Envirocare encourages organisations to pursue sustainable prosperity and reverse the decline of New Zealand's natural resources. Toitū Envirocare helped us measure the organisational footprint of our 10.44 CO₂ equivalent tonnes.

As a member of the Climate Leaders Coalition, Wright Communications is committed to setting a greenhouse gas emission reduction target. Although our carbon footprint is relatively small we are committing to halving our emissions by 2025 (against baseline year) to stay within 1.5° of global warming.

How will we do this?

- ✓ Only fly when absolutely necessary.
- ✓ Make greater use of remote-meeting technologies and virtual collaboration tools e.g., Zoom, MS Teams, Googledocs.
- ✓ Maintain vehicles for optimal fuel use; walk or use public transport if possible to attend client meetings.

Sustainable Business Council



Wright Communications has been verified carbon neutral for the fourth consecutive year in 2021

DIVERSITY OF CONSULTANTS

Recent events, particularly in the media landscape of the United States, have encouraged many of us to consider our position and impact on racial equity in our everyday lives, especially within the workplace. The climate is right for communicators to become more accountable and positively influence behaviour change around diversity.

Despite being a profession that draws from and speaks to a multicultural New Zealand society, there is limited representation of ethnic and minority groups within the communications industry. A Commercial Communications Council (CCC) diversity and inclusiveness survey showed that 87% of the industry is led by NZ European/Pakeha.

While the figures tell a dire story, the Public Relations industry is in a position of privilege to voice and advocate for equality, justice and human rights. Not only is it our responsibility, this is also where we thrive, excel and deliver for our clients every day.

From an ethnicity perspective, this means we need to:

- triple the number of Māori practitioners
- quadruple the number of Pasifika practitioners
- double the number of Asian practitioners
- increase the number of practitioners that identify as men, particularly among our lower age range, in the industry
- ensure gender pay equity at all levels as men are still earning more than women.

As this is probably one of the biggest issues – if not the biggest issue – the industry faces, Wright Communications wants to embrace this issue and be part of the solution.

Wright Communications is working alongside PRINZ in the early stages of developing a Diversity and Inclusion workstream to drive positive change for our industry. To be truly reflective of New Zealand society, it is clear we

need to attract and retain a more diverse range of practitioners at all levels of our profession. Involving about 20 participants from all different walks of life in the PR industry, the workstream is underway but had to put its meetings on hold during the latter half of 2021 as many PR practitioners had extra COVID-19 work on top of their usual workloads. It is expected that the workstream will reconvene in the first quarter of 2022 to build momentum again.

Diversity of Consultants

Ethnicity/ Nationality	
NZ European/Pakeha	10
Samoan	2
Age	
20-29	4
30-39	1
40-49	1
50-59	1
60-69	4
Gender	
Female (full-time)	7 (64%)
Male (full-time)	4 (36%)
Female (finance contractor)	1
Female (intern)	1
Total extra resource	2
Total full-time employees	10
Management Positions Gender	
Female	1
Male	1
Number of managers	2

CREATIVE THINKING TO SET OUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

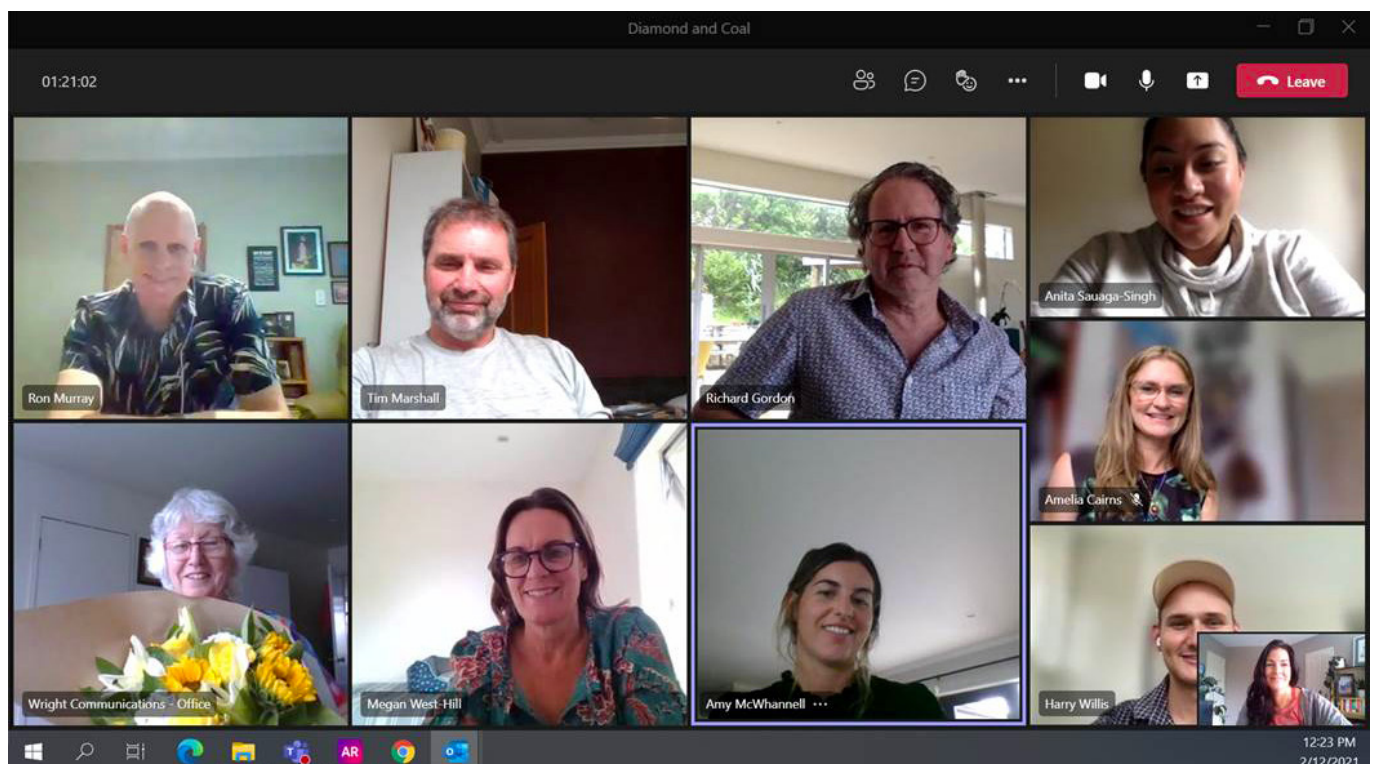
Each month we supply our clients with our latest thinking. Over the past 12 months, we have penned thought pieces on a range of topics from trends in PR through to crisis and issues management.

Our Blog Headlines for 2021:

- PR pathways in a pandemic world
- Kiwis want brands to lead on sustainability
- The place for reputation in a post-Covid world
- Employee communications – what fails and how to fix it
- A bolder role for influencers
- The death of voicemail?
- What the COP?
- Supporting firms to do the Wright thing

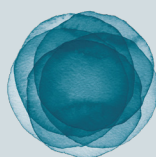
ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES

- Proudly keeping everyone in the agency employed during the pandemic
- Our team got double-vaccinated
- Embedded our COVID-19 health and safety protocols
- Winner of the PRINZ Public Relations Agency of the Year for the second time in a row
- Gained more sustainability work from new and existing clients
- Brought our flexible working policy to life
- Celebrated another Duvet Day for our employees
- Recruited Account Executive Amy McWhannell and Nicki Pearce as Office Manager and Personal Assistant to the Managing Director and Amelia Cairns as a Senior Account Director
- Celebrated Anita Sauaga-Singh's daughter's 1st birthday and another pregnancy
- Supported each other through a year of uncertainties, triumphs and challenges.



WRIGHT

COMMUNICATIONS



PRINZ
AWARDS
PR CONSULTANCY
OF THE YEAR 2021

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