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Lisa Vallee-Smith, APR

In her role as CEO of Airfoil Public Relations, which she co-founded in 2000, Lisa is responsible for ensuring the agency's success on three fronts: reputation/ market position, strategic planning, and sales. She is an active participant on many of the agency's accounts, namely Trinity Health, Merillat, Microsoft, ePrize, Faurecia, American Laser Centers, Infor, National Logistics Management, and CareTech Solutions, among others.



A public relations consultant with more than 20 years of agency work, Lisa has experience with industry segments that include consumer packaged goods, automotive manufacturing and aftermarket, automotive supply chain, information technology, retail, and financial services. Her expertise includes marketing communications, corporate communications, strategic media relations, research, and issues management.

At Airfoil, Lisa has led signature client campaigns, including:

- Market introduction for start-up SupplySolution (now Tradebeam)
- North American Debut of Microsoft's Automotive and Industrial Equipment industry vertical
- Trinity Health System's Unified Enterprise Ministry communications program
- Market launch and brand identity for ANXeBusiness, a start-up within Science Applications International Corp.
- North American awareness and positioning for Faurecia North America
- The George P. Johnson Company's long-term strategic repositioning campaign

Prior to establishing Airfoil, Lisa was president and majority owner of Franco Public Relations Group, where she led a turnaround program to rebuild that agency's declining marketshare and reputation. During her Franco tenure, she carried out award-winning campaigns for Starbucks, AutoNation, Nissan, Chrysler, MGM Grand Detroit Casino, The North American International Auto Show, and The American Automobile Centennial.. She established a technology practice in 1997, when she competed for and won the Great Lakes District of Microsoft account. With that signature account, the tech practice grew to be a dominant force in the Franco firm and was split off to become a separate, independent firm, now known as Airfoil.

Lisa's background includes work for Creamer Dickson Basford (now Magnet Communications) in New York, where she supervised a national issues management program for client Ocean Spray Cranberries that revolved around new FDA food labeling regulations. The campaign involved cooperative relationships with associations including the American Dietetic Association, as well as a national high school-based sports nutrition program directed to young women in partnership with the National High School Athletic Coaches Association. During this time, Lisa also supervised the Ethan Allen account, which was repositioning itself through the introduction and marketing of new furniture lines.

Over the course of Lisa's career, she has counseled executives and companies in managing issues – legal and otherwise – including work for a defendant in a major national class action lawsuit involving allegedly defective breast implants. Other issues and crisis management projects have involved workplace violence, bankruptcies, consumer activism, mergers and acquisitions, product recalls, and special interest groups.

Lisa is an accredited member (APR) of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). She is past president of PRSA-Detroit, and takes an active role in the southeast Michigan community, where she is a board member of The Grosse Pointe Academy as well as Forgotten Harvest.

Lisa earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism/public relations from Wayne State University. She has been honored by the AdCraft Club of Detroit and the American Women in Radio and Television for professional achievements. Recently, she received the 2004 Wayne State University Alumni Achievement Award, and was a finalist in the 2006 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year program.

Lisa Vallee-Smith began serving on the Board of Visitors in the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts in January 2006.