



LET'S TELL YOUR STORY

MELISA KIRBY CREATIVE

PORTFOLIO

Meet the Creator

Copywriting & Editing

Marketing

Legal

Lifestyle

Government & Politics

Health & Wellness

Executive Ghostwriting

Press & Public Relations

Press and P.R.

Branding & Website Development

Small Business Branding

Testimonials

Happy Client Testimonials

Hire Melisa

MEET THE CREATOR

Melisa Kirby is a veteran copywriter, editor and digital marketing specialist. Her services include brand development, website design, content, press and project management.

She is a skilled storyteller, with more than 25 years of experience representing C-suite executives and entrepreneurs in healthcare, business, marketing, technology, lifestyle, travel and politics. Her work includes print, web, blog, SEO, email, snail mail, speeches, press, presentations and forward-facing roles.

✍ Experienced in researching, branding, writing, proofreading, editing, blogging and building websites and marketing funnels since 1996.

✍ Former founder and CEO of a cloud-based healthcare IT application which included thousands of content pages, marketing materials, training manuals, blogs, patient education copy, presentations, speeches and other collateral.

✍ Former co-owner of two integrative health clinics, responsible for communications, marketing and strategic partnerships.

✍ Stickler for style, spelling, meter and voice.

✍ Opposed to the Oxford comma (unless writing for a UK audience), semicolons and double-spaced sentences. Big fan of AP Style.

✍ Efficient, on time, on budget.

Let Melisa tell your story.





COPYWRITING & EDITING

MARKETING



SIGNIFICANTLY SUCCESSFUL

This boutique marketing agency hired Melisa to write agency copy and provide ghost writing for high-profile clients.

GOAL

Represent the agency persona for marketing content.


Write blog, social and email copy for high-profile clients.

RESULT

Melisa wrote several blogs for the agency, and multiple short- and long-form pieces for the firm's clients.

CONTACT ME

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SAMPLE

MYTHS, FABLES, & LIES: 4 FACTS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING YOU NEED TO KNOW

You might find it hard to believe that not all that long ago, many businesses wondered if they really needed a website.

Some actually opted out of investing in a website because they believed it was unnecessary.

Say what?

If you're over 45, you might remember those days. Today, that mindset seems ridiculous, doesn't it? How could anyone have believed that? How many of those businesses actually survived?

If someone represents their opinion in a particularly forceful or seemingly factual way, you might be prone to simply take their word for it rather than conducting more research.

In the year 2000, there were just over 17 million websites in the world. Today, there are well over a billion. Is there anyone around now who believes a business doesn't need a website?

Probably not.

What about the people who say, "You don't need a Facebook page," or even more recently, "Pinterest is for moms." This is the kind of urban lore that can leave your business languishing in the past.

Let's take a look at some of the "lies, damned lies, and statistics" (thank you, Mr Twain) surrounding social media marketing today.

We've uncovered 4 facts about social media you need to know right now.

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Lie: You can just buy followers.

Fact: No!

First of all, fake accounts are icky. Second, even the most social media-challenged are learning to spot them. Most importantly, big fake numbers add up to tiny engagement stats, and that equals a weak online presence. Facebook, in particular, enforces a super-secret algorithm that punishes bad engagement with less exposure.

Considering how difficult it is to make your message stand out in a crowd, you want to do everything possible to boost your exposure by growing a genuine fan base and posting fan-centric messages that earn likes, shares, comments and new follows.

Lie: You don't need a Facebook page.

Fact: Facebook outranked Google in 2010. Seven years ago! So yeah, your business needs a Facebook page.

And if you're thinking:

"Well, I'm B2B, and Facebook doesn't work for my business."

"My ideal customer is older, and older people don't use Facebook."

"My target is millennials, and they don't go on Facebook."

Don't believe it. The fact is, if Facebook were a country, it would be the third largest country in the world.

Here are some facts about Facebook that might blow your mind [source: Facebook, of course]:

- Facebook has over **2.01 billion** users
- 1.57 billion users are on Facebook mobile **daily**
- Facebook users are 53% female and 47% male
- The average Facebook user has 155 "friends"
- 56% of online **seniors** aged 65+ are on Facebook and 63% are between age 50-64
- 87% of online users of age 18-29 are on Facebook

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- 74 percent of college graduates are on Facebook
- 72 percent of online users of **income more than \$75K** are on Facebook
- 82 percent of 18-29 online users in the U.S. use Facebook
- 79 percent of 30-49 online users in the U.S. use Facebook
- 56 percent of U.S. online users ages 65+ use Facebook

Lie: Twitter is for kids.

Fact: Over 250 billion tweets were generated on Twitter in 2010. Today, Twitter is the #1 platform for “micro-blogging,” with over 328 million users generating over 500 million tweets every day.

That’s one busy bird.

Here are some more interesting facts Twitter thinks you should know:

- 24 percent of all internet male users use Twitter, whereas 21% of all internet female users use Twitter
- 79 percent of Twitter accounts are based **outside the United States**
- There are over **67 million** Twitter users in US
- Total number of Twitter users in UK is 13 million
- 37 percent of Twitter users are between ages of 18 and 29, 25% users are 30-49 years old
- 54 percent of Twitter users **earn more than \$50,000 a year** at least
- The top three countries by user count outside the U.S. are Brazil (27.7 million users), Japan (25.9 million), and Mexico (23.5 million)
- Twitter can handle 18 quintillion user accounts. Here’s what that looks like in numbers: **18,000,000,000,000,000,000**

Lie: You can handle your social media management on your own.

Fact: Maybe. Maybe not. Social media management is a full-time, 24/7, 365 days-a-year job.

We’re not just saying that because it’s what we do. We’re saying that because we know!

So ask yourself:

“Can I afford to take my focus away from my business in order to manage my own social media?”

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“Do I have a trusted employee with the skills to do it for me?”

If yes to either of those questions, then we can help you do it the right way. Check out the Significantly Successful Business Academy for our awesome, affordable, and PROVEN do-it-yourself course.

If you don't have the time or resources to manage your own social media presence, then contact us for a FREE consultation call. We'll get to know you, learn about your goals, and give you our ideas for the most successful way to promote your brand online.

END



MARKETING



STING MARKETING

Rapidly growing Arizona marketing agency. Specializes in SEO-driven strategies for local small business.

GOAL

Improve overall quality of the agency's content for improved reach and rank.

RESULT

Sting is walking its talk with top-quality content and search rank proof.

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SAMPLE

WHAT IS CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION?

Imagine leaving your business cards pinned to the board at your local coffee shop. You have beautiful cards! Your brand is strong, your colors stand out, your headline message is spot on. But time goes by and not a single soul calls you from those cards.

A visit to the coffee shop reveals the problem -- someone else has pinned their cards on top of yours. Your top competitor.

All of this time, people in that coffee shop have been passing that board and not calling you. If they're calling anyone, it's your competitor.

Your website is like those business cards. The competition is at your heels day and night. People might be stopping by but if you aren't keeping them on your site and convincing them that your products and services are worth their time in clicks and contact forms, then you've lost them.

You've also lost the Conversion Rate Optimization challenge.

The Technical Definition

In technical terms, Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) is an important strategy in digital marketing campaigns. It involves the analytical assessment and strategic deployment of what works in converting your ideal customer from a website looker to an actual lead.

A good CRO campaign will:

1. Determine which features of your website are converting visitors to leads by getting those leads to complete a contact form, give you their contact information in exchange for a download, sign up for your emails, register for a webinar, schedule a call, etc.
2. Determine which features of your website aren't accomplishing any of that or converting the wrong kinds of leads.
3. Identify opportunities to capture more ideal customers through smarter digital marketing efforts, such as with more engaging pop-ups, more compelling e-books, a more tantalizing offer, etc.

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Simply put, CRO is the strategic process of getting the maximum results from your digital marketing dollars.

Do you believe you're getting the absolute max out of your website? If not, we can help. But first, let's dig a little deeper into the science behind CRO.

What CRO Means to You

Unless you're the technical type or have a degree in marketing, all of these terms might sound like Greek. But put another way, you'll understand the importance of CRO and get excited about getting started:

CRO means getting your money out of your website (and blog, landing pages, online ads and everything else you're paying for to turn strangers into paying customers).

To begin to understand where your website is performing well and where it's falling short, you need to define a few important details. Jot down the answers to these questions:

1. Who is your ideal customer? A hot lead who can't afford your products or services isn't it. A Negative Nancy type isn't, either. What good is a new paying customer if they're going to cost you in excessive support? So define your ideal customer in specific terms. Doing this will help you determine how well your digital marketing is attracting and converting the right type of awesome customer.
2. Where is your digital presence? Your website is the obvious place to start but your digital marketing spending doesn't stop there. Are you using social media? What about email marketing, online ads or leadpages? If you're spending money anywhere online, you want to get the most out of your money. Take note of everywhere your brand appears online.
3. How are you trying to convert visitors to leads? This is anywhere you try to get an ideal potential customer to give you their contact information or to contact you directly. Email and list sign-up forms, contact forms, appointment scheduling tools, e-books or other downloads, social follows, live chat widgets, click-to-call and click-to-email buttons, etc. These are the places where you are investing your money and your site visitors' time, and you are either doing a great job of it or not. This is the heart and soul of CRO.

Get Google Analytics. We mention Google Analytics often here at Sting and for good reason -- it's basically the digital marketing bible for learning the truth about your digital marketing efforts. Google Analytics breaks down all of the stats that tell you

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whether your site is doing a good job or not with converting website traffic to qualified leads. When you have a few minutes, take a look at this recent blog on understanding and using Google Analytics, and if you aren't already using Google Analytics, this would be a great time to start. We can help with this, of course. Contact us and we'll take it from there.

Understanding the Numbers

Once you've done all of that, it's time to face facts -- how are your digital marketing investments paying off?

The math is fairly simple once you know the variables:

$$\# \text{ of Conversions} \div \# \text{ Visitors to Your Site} = \text{Your Conversion Rate}$$

Here's an example: a site with 2500 visitors and 25 conversions has a conversion rate of 1 percent.

So what caused that 1 percent to convert from casual browser to converted lead? The answer to this is what you really need to know because in knowing this answer, you can figure out how to do more of that. (And knowing when and why the other 99 percent didn't convert is just as valuable.)

Google Analytics is going to give you all of those details so once again, if you aren't using it yet, you will want to get started with Google Analytics asap.

Now that you know your ideal customer, how you're trying to connect with them and whether you're doing a good job of it or not, you can begin the work of optimizing your traffic into more and better conversions.

Getting to Work

To do this, you will create a CRO strategy that improves your digital marketing in ways that will move the 1 percent (or whatever your Conversion Rate is) higher and higher, getting more out of your marketing investment.

A great CRO strategy will look at the things you're already doing well, and do more of that, and look at things that aren't working so well and fix them.

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- Includes all the different types of learners in a group: auditory, kinesthetic, and visual
- Heightens participation levels across the entire group of people

Jocelyn Ring is a branding expert, business strategist, and visual facilitator. She has more than 20 years' experience working with established entrepreneurs and medium-sized corporations. She is best known for her custom large-scale visuals of brand strategy development.

Interested in learning more about your brand or considering a re-brand? Check out TheRingEffect.com or drop Jocelyn a line. She'd love to learn all about your business goals and help you reach them.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE RING EFFECT BLOG

When you subscribe to The Ring Effect blog for free updates, you'll discover:

- How to reduce wasted time in meetings
- Why visual facilitation increases productivity
- How to increase understanding and communication within groups
- Why visuals boost employee engagement (so people don't feel like they're just going through the motions)
- How to eliminate your competition through branding
- How to produce strategic plans employees create, own, and can roll out themselves
- Why traditional meeting techniques could be costing you big money
- And a whole lot more!

END



PRIVACYPOLICIES.COM

Offshore legal forms company hired Melisa to write and edit high volumes of SEO-savvy content to dominate the US market leading up to the effective date of an important European privacy law.

GOAL


Create hundreds of writer assignments. Write and edit long-form submissions to strict standards. Procure and manage global writing team. Guarantee no duplicate content and ensure SEO-ranking copy.

RESULT

More than 400 blogs, ebooks, videos and social media posts were created in less than 60 days. SEO goals were exceeded. You probably noticed the Privacy Policy updates in your in-box. (Sorry about that.)

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SAMPLE

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE GDPR?

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will go into effect in May. Are you ready?

GDPR imposes strict rules determining how companies operating in the EU must manage and protect personal data they collect from EU citizens. The goal of GDPR is to protect privacy and prevent data breaches at a time of increasing cyber-security concerns. It imposes stricter rules for privacy protection and harsher penalties for non-compliance.

If your company operates in the EU, you need to know how GDPR affects you, how to comply with its requirements (by having a Privacy Policy), and the penalties for failure to comply.

This includes US-based and other companies operating from outside the EU in business transactions with EU citizens. This provision, known as "territorial scope," replaces the more ambiguous 1995 rules which imposed very little regulation of non-EU entities.

Now, GDPR extends to all companies collecting personal data from any EU resident if the data is used to process financial transactions or monitor user activities that occur in the EU.

GDPR clearly states that the rules for collecting and handling personal data apply to all entities operating in the EU, regardless of whether the processing of the information takes place in the EU or not.

GDPR defines activities subject to rules as:

1. Offering goods or services to EU citizens, (irrespective of whether payment is required)
2. The monitoring of behaviour that takes place within the EU

GDPR further establishes that all non-EU businesses collecting or managing the personal data of EU residents must appoint a representative in the EU to ensure compliance.

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Consent

Rules for establishing user consent require companies to provide easily accessible and easily understood language, with additional considerations provided to children in their Privacy Policy. You also must allow the user to retract consent as easily as they provided it.

Penalties

GDPR imposes a tiered penalty system ranging from two percent to up to four percent of “annual global turnover,” or €20 Million, whichever is greater.

Breach Notification

Under the GDPR, a breach notification is required whenever a data breach is likely to “result in a risk for the rights and freedoms of individuals.” The notification must be made to customers and controllers within 72 hours of having first become aware of the breach.

Right to Access

GDPR mandates the right for data subjects to know if their personal information is being collected, where you are collecting it and your precise reasons for doing so. If requested, the controller must provide a copy of the data to the user free of charge and in electronic format.

Right to be Forgotten

This entitles users to direct the controller to erase their data, to cease further use of the data, and even have third parties cease processing of that data.

Data Portability

Users have with the right to order the transfer of their personal data to another entity’s controller, and you have the obligation to fulfill that order.

Privacy by Design

The privacy requirements apply from the first interaction with you and the EU citizen. You must not only protect data collected, you also must only collect data you need to carry out your stated duties and objectives.

Data Protection Officers

In certain cases, GDPR requires subject entities to establish a controller, known as the Data Protection Officer (DPO), to oversee internal records. The DPO must meet a strict set of criteria:

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1. Must be appointed on the basis of professional qualities and, in particular, expert knowledge on data protection law and practices.
2. May be a staff member or an external service provider.
3. The controller's contact details must be provided to the authorities.
4. The controller must be provided with appropriate resources to carry out tasks and maintain expert knowledge with ongoing education.
5. Must report directly to the highest level of management.
6. Must not carry out any other duties that might create a conflict of interest.

Keys to Compliance with GDPR

The GDPR includes rules on providing privacy information to users and requires that a Privacy Policy is understandable and easily accessible. This is intended to ensure that information within a Privacy Policy is easily understood and that companies seek to achieve best practices when collecting and handling personal user information.

Strategies for Compliance

The first step in complying with GDPR is to create a unique and comprehensive Privacy Policy for your company. Compared to the old EU rules for privacy, the GDPR requires companies to include much more clear and specific information in privacy notices about the collection and handling of private user data.

There are many ways to incorporate GDPR guidelines into your Privacy Policy, such as by outlining preference management tools provided on your site, or by spelling out each individual requirement and your methods for compliance. Whatever you do, do **NOT** simply copy-paste another company's Privacy Policy.

Every company is unique in structure and in how it conducts business, especially when it comes to collecting and managing private user information. How you account for the many details must be spelled out in your unique Privacy Policy.

When creating your Privacy Policy, you must adequately and clearly address a minimum of the following:

- What information does your company collect from users or website visitors?
- Who is collecting it: is it your company or a third party?
- How is it collected: by active opt-in or by passive collection, such as with website cookies or crawlers?

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- Why is it being collected? GDPR requires companies to explicitly identify why personal information is being collected.
- How will it be used: currently or possibly in the future?
- Who will it be shared with?
- What is the potential implication for the individual from whom you are collecting the information?
- Is your intended use likely to cause individuals to object or complain?
- How can individuals opt out of your data collection protocols?
- How can individuals get an electronic record of the information you have about them?
- How can individuals direct you to transfer the information to another entity?

Preference Management Tools

Preference management tools are considered to be the most user-friendly methods for explaining data collection policies.

A user-friendly privacy dashboard provides an excellent way to identify the types of data you are collecting and how a user may control opt-in or opt-out. An effective dashboard also allows users to provide or revoke consent at any time, which is a key requirement of GDPR.

Communication Counts

One of the biggest challenges in creating a bullet-proof Privacy Policy is to get users to actually read it.

Since the GDPR requires you to clearly and simply communicate your Privacy Policies (or “data collection policies”), it’s important that you make every effort to ensure your audience will read and understand your policies.

The days of lengthy, legalese-style Privacy Policies are over. You now must use clear, easily understood language your audience can access and understand.

You also must clearly outline how you will communicate with your audience about their privacy protections.

GDPR provides the following options for legally communicating with users about how you manage their data:

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1. Orally - face-to-face or over the telephone
2. In Writing - in letters, print materials, advertisements, forms, applications, etc.
3. Signage - such as on posters
4. Electronically - such as on your website, emails, mobile apps, chat tools or SMS/text messages

Further, the methods you use to communicate with your audience must be spelled out.

It's recommended that you use the same method to communicate with your audience that they used when providing you with their private data. For example, if you collected a phone number for marketing text messages, communicate through text message as your main method.

However, it's increasingly popular to allow the user to request a "preferred method" of communication.

Good to Know

As you review your current Privacy Policy or create a new one, consider the full scope of GDPR to ensure compliance.

Following is a helpful list of things you need to consider to fully understand your responsibilities in meeting GDPR requirements:

- If you process data about individuals in the context of selling goods or services to citizens in other EU countries, you are required to comply with GDPR.
- GDPR applies both to EU entities and non-EU entities offering goods and services to EU citizens, and/or managing personal data of EU citizens.
- Penalties including fines of two percent to up to four percent of annual global turnover may be imposed for failure to comply with GDPR. The rules and penalties apply to both controllers and processors.
- Any personally identifiable information that can be attributed to a person is subject to GDPR rules. This data might include a name, image or biometric identifiers such as fingerprint or iris scan, email address, bank account or other account numbers, social platform activities, health information, device IP address, etc.
- User consent must be clear and distinguishable. It must be communicated in an easy to understand format, using clear and plain language. It also must be as easy

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to revoke consent as it is to grant it.

- Parental consent is required to process personal data of children age 16 and younger.
- You may need to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO) if you are a public authority or an organization that engages in broad systematic monitoring or processing of sensitive personal information.
- Data breaches which could pose a risk to individuals must be notified to the DPA within 72 hours and to all affected individuals without undue delay.

Get Started with Your GDPR Privacy Policy

The larger or more complex your company, the more detail will be required in your data protection policies and procedures, including your Privacy Policy. You must ensure you have adequate measures and controls in place, and that employees and outside entities have clear guidance on your policies and procedures.

The standard requirements of a strong Privacy Policy include topics such as the document purpose, scope, objectives, responsibilities and procedures. Less is not more when it comes to privacy protection requirements and efforts to limit your liability.

END





IROCKER STAND UP PADDLE BOARD

This inflatable stand up paddle board company hired Melisa to create unique blogs for multiple international audiences in order to rank in five countries.




Create SEO-savvy content to move new stand up paddle board company into a competitive global position.



iROCKER successfully leads in the US, Australia, Canada and the UK, and is taking on Germany now.

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SAMPLE

WHY A WELL-BUILT STAND UP PADDLE BOARD IS A SUP MUST

How many times have you crashed into debris during a stand up paddle session? Logs floating along the river, shells bouncing around in the ocean and all kinds of other hazards are a stand up paddle boarder's reality. In fact, the debris scene seems worse since the past storm season.

We know hazards and debris are a fact of having fun on the water. This is why we use only the finest materials and utmost care in making every iRocker stand up paddle board.

We understand that quality is everything when it comes to safety. We're stand up boarders, too. (That's why we're so obsessed with making the best boards possible!)

At iRocker, we truly value your safety and take pride in building the sturdiest and safest stand up paddle boards available today.

You may know iRocker because of our reputation for speed, stability and durability, and we're proud of that. We love that about iRocker, too!

But do you also know how well our iRocker boards are built? We want you to know, because quality and durability are the hallmarks of our brand, and because your safety and enjoyment depend on it.

The iRocker is one of the best built iSUPs on the market. Period.

Our mission from day one was to create the best board possible with the best materials we could find.

Our goal was to build a board specifically designed for speed and stability that also could stand up to debris and hazards while keeping you safe. That's a tall order, but we were determined. We decided we would accept no compromise in getting the very best results.

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We spent a lot of time and money researching and testing different materials and designs. Finally, the amazingly durable, sleek and fast iRocker was born, and we couldn't be happier.

We use the highest quality, quad layer, military-grade PVC, with heat-welded seams and a six-inch triple-layer drop stitch core. This might sound like Greek but it's really simple. It means our boards can take a beating and keep on going.

Shells, rocks, branches? No problem.

The increased thickness of iRocker boards is two inches more than other boards. That might seem like a little but actually, it's a lot. That added thickness adds up to greatly increased stability and buoyancy, ensuring you get the best ride possible.

We also use a non-slip diamond groove traction pad to give you added security and confidence, and when you're feeling confident, you're having more fun on the water.

Building so much extra durability into our boards presented extra challenges when we were designing iRocker to be inflatable. Creating a board that is as travel-friendly as it is safe and durable was no small task.

But we did it.

We know that being able to pack your board in your car or even your suitcase is simply not negotiable. Travel is part of the stand up paddle culture, after all. We made iRocker as easy to inflate and deflate as it is to hit the road to find new water. And we did it without compromising our hallmark high quality standards.

You are welcome!

Have you ever had a scary encounter with debris on the water? We'd love to hear all about how you handled it. Use the fields below to tell us all about it.

END



GOVERNMENT & POLITICS



venture
smarter

VENTURE SMARTER

This fast-growing smart cities advocacy organization hosted a major conference to attract Congressional support and VC capital.

GOAL


Create blog copy for succinct speaker recaps in real time in order to promote online buzz for the event.

RESULT

Venture Smarter successfully persuaded the US Congress to create a bi-partisan Smart Cities Caucus, and raised over \$50 million for a Smart Infrastructure Challenge.

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SAMPLE

HOW SMART TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE WORK TOGETHER

Transportation and Infrastructure planning proved to be a high-interest topic at the Smart Regions Congress held last month in Washington, DC.

Panelists talking on Intelligent Transportation, Systems, and Infrastructure in Smart Regions agreed on a central theme: that cities must support autonomous transportation in order to grow their economies and improve quality of life.

Thea Walsh of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission suggested a push for collaboration among the private sector, building owners, and government agencies to adjust from old ways of planning.

"We are out of parking spaces. The cost of another parking garage is not something our city or region can or should shoulder," Walsh said.

The solution? Tapping into technology and intelligent resources to design infrastructure that supports autonomous transportation for individuals, groups and even fleets.

"Smart transportation is multi-modal. It gets people and products where they need to go to support our economy, solve congestion, reduce emissions and improve the social experience," said Venture Smarter Co-founder, Zack Huhn.

Dave Barmore, a leader for Uber's federal affairs team, described a mission to understand and improve the "future of the curb."

Looking to Cincinnati as an example, Barmore said, "Cincinnati has more Fortune 500 companies per capita than New York City, Chicago, and LA. How can we offer all of these employers the tools to provide their employees an opportunity to commute more efficiently?"

Uber has recently teamed up with the City of Cincinnati and regional partners for smart mobility lab efforts.

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Gabe Klein, Co-founder of CityFi, agreed, "Single occupancy vehicles are bankrupting us. Our people, our communities and our government agencies. The future of transportation will put more focus on active transportation and less focus on parking," Klein said.

All on the panel agreed that considering the needs of people first and harvesting the vast volumes of available data are central to developing the smartest transportation solutions.

With safety being a core consideration as well, Jason Goldman said we can solve safety problems by reducing or even eliminating traffic injuries and fatalities.

Goldman is Vice President, External Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement for Intelligent Transportation Society of America.

The Smart Regions Congress was presented by Venture Smarter as part of the Regional Smart Cities Initiative. RSCI supports interdisciplinary and interagency efforts to develop technology and process planning standards at the local, county, state, and federal level.

END



HEALTH & WELLNESS



VALBUENA 360 WELLNESS

Contemporary health and wellness center specializing in non-surgical anti-aging techniques.

GOAL

Lead local search results to attract women and men. Use SEO-savvy content to compete with higher-budget surgery centers.


RESULT

Created a content strategy to attract people interested in fat loss and traditional surgical methods to reduce fat.

Valbuena now leads local search results.

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SAMPLE

LOSE WEIGHT AND INCHES WITH COOLSCULPTING FAT REDUCTION TREATMENTS FROM VALBUENA

Losing weight can help you look and feel better. Until the weight comes back, and then the weight loss cycle begins again.

You're not alone. The simple fact is that unless you eliminate the fat cells living inside your body, you're likely to gain all of that lost weight back.

This is because weight loss programs merely reduce the size of fat cells. They do not eliminate them.

Even vigorous exercise can't eliminate fat cells, tighten a double chin or tame a bulging muffin top.

CoolSculpting can.

CoolSculpting Fat Reduction Treatments from Valbuena eliminate the fat cells that cause so many people to regain lost weight.

Permanently.

Do you want to lose inches, re-shape your body and eliminate fat for good? Schedule a free CoolSculpting consultation with Valbuena today.

What is CoolSculpting

CoolSculpting is a safe and painless technique that freezes stubborn fat cells and eliminates them through your body's natural processes. It can be used to tighten and tone specific areas of your body such as your chin, arms, belly, thighs and other areas where you want to lose fat and inches.

CoolSculpting not only eliminates fat cells, it also helps tighten and tone fatty areas with FDA-cleared fat-freezing and body-sculpting technology. As a result, your clothes will fit better and you'll feel better about your appearance.

And unlike other procedures which can cause your body's fat cells to migrate to other

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areas, CoolSculpting does not affect untreated areas. This means that using CoolSculpting to re-shape specific areas of your body and eliminate fat will not cause fat to move to untreated areas.

With CoolSculpting, you'll target pesky bulges and stubborn fat to eliminate fat cells, tighten and tone treated areas, and improve your overall appearance.

CoolSculpting is a painless, non-surgical and FDA-cleared treatment for the long-lasting elimination of fat cells that make weight loss so difficult to maintain. It is not a weight loss program. It's a long-lasting fat-reduction and body-shaping solution for eliminating the fatty bulges that diet and exercise can't.

CoolSculpting can help you eliminate up to 25% of your body's fat cells while tightening and toning surrounding tissue at the same time. Best of all, your results will last!

How CoolSculpting Works

CoolSculpting works by delivering specifically targeted cooling technology to fat cells under your skin. It freezes and destroys stubborn fat cells, and helps your body eliminate those fat cells through natural waste elimination processes.

Because fat cells are destroyed and eliminated with CoolSculpting, your results can be permanent. Combined with proper nutrition and regular exercise, CoolSculpting helps you achieve and maintain the results you want.

CoolSculpting is completely painless and you'll begin to see the results in a few weeks. Each CoolSculpting session lasts only about an hour, so you can easily fit your CoolSculpting sessions into your busy schedule.

Some people need just one CoolSculpting treatment to get their desired results. Others who want to target several areas may need a few treatments to achieve their ideal outcome. The number of treatments you'll need will be determined by your goals, your body and the recommendations of our trained medical professionals.

Lose Fat and Inches with CoolSculpting

Both women and men of all ages are excellent candidates for CoolSculpting. While we tend to store fat in different areas and experience different results with diet and

CONTINUED



exercise, we all respond beautifully to CoolSculpting. Many people like to use CoolSculpting to reduce fat and improve the appearance of persistent areas of fat that simply won't go away with diet and exercise alone.

Areas such as the chin, belly, upper arms, thighs and "love handles" are some of the most popular places where CoolSculpting can provide the fat reduction and body contouring that diet and exercise cannot.

And because we can treat multiple areas of your body in a single CoolSculpting session, you can look forward to a vastly improved overall appearance in a few weeks.

Remember, CoolSculpting is more than fat reduction -- it's a holistic body shaping procedure performed in our medical office painlessly and with zero downtime. This means there's no plastic surgery and no painful healing with CoolSculpting.

Over the course of a few weeks, you will begin to see and feel the results. Your clothes will fit better, treated areas will look more toned, and you'll feel better about your appearance.

What to Expect from CoolSculpting

CoolSculpting is a painless procedure performed in our office by a specially trained physician or medical specialist. Each CoolSculpting session lasts about an hour, and can target one or multiple areas of your body.

During your first visit, our trained practitioner will talk with you about your trouble spots and goals. Together, you will look at your body's shape and fatty areas, and create a plan to eliminate fat and contour your body where you want it most.

Once your CoolSculpting treatment plan is determined, you'll be ready for your first session. In some cases, just one session can achieve your desired results. Sometimes, several sessions may be recommended.

During your CoolSculpting session, you will be resting comfortably on a treatment table. Your medical specialist will place a gel pad on the targeted area. Next, a CoolSculpting applicator will be used to deliver a controlled and painless cooling procedure to target and kill fatty cells.

CONTINUED



The entire process is private, quiet and comfortable. You will not feel any pain during your CoolSculpting procedure, and you can use your treatment time to read, scroll through social media or text your friends and family. You can even take a nap if you'd like!

In the days and weeks following your CoolSculpting session, the frozen fat cells will die off and be eliminated by your body's natural waste elimination functions. You will see and feel the improvement in treated areas!

Love Your Body with CoolSculpting Results

If you're ready to finally get rid of that double chin or bulging belly, or maybe even re-shape a pesky muffin top, CoolSculpting Fat Reduction Treatments from Valbuena can help.

Give us a call today or [click here](#) to schedule your CoolSculpting consultation. In just a few weeks, you'll begin to see the contoured body you want.

CoolSculpting and its design are trademarks of ZELTIQ Aesthetics, Inc., an Allergan affiliate, and provided to our patients by specially trained medical professionals in the comfort of our office.

END



EXECUTIVE GHOSTWRITING



The Ring Effect

JOCELYN RING, CERTIFIED BRAND SPECIALIST

Sought-after corporate re-branding professional and C-suite executive image consultant.

GOAL

Represent the principal executive in multiple online channels and other written materials to allow her to focus on client campaigns.

RESULT

Melisa successfully mastered the voice of Jocelyn Ring to create and grow her LinkedIn, Facebook and blog channels.

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SAMPLE

NOT ENJOYING YEAR-END STRATEGIC PLANNING? 3 WAYS VISUAL FACILITATION CAN TAKE THE PAIN OUT OF PLANNING

Have you ever thought about how much company meetings cost?

Most people don't, but maybe they should.

Let's take a look at what a typical meeting might cost. Let's say you and seven of your coworkers have a two-hour meeting. If the average annual salary is \$45,000, the cost of salaries alone is \$450. The annual cost is more than \$23,000!

With that kind of cost at stake, are you getting a decent return on investment from your time? If not, is there a more productive way to hold meetings?

In fact, there is—with the help of visual facilitation.

Any group having a meeting that involves producing and discussing a lot of information will benefit from visual facilitation.

Visual facilitation combines traditional facilitation and visual recordings. The facilitator leads the meeting and guides the group through a process like strategic planning, brainstorming, or brand planning, working with wall charts that can be 4 feet x 8 feet, or 4 feet x 16 feet. They're big, and this is part of how visual facilitation gets the focused and cohesive participation of all in the room.

As the facilitator is leading the meeting, they are capturing words and information from the participants. This allows the group to focus, make connections from a lot of different information, and create a record of everything discussed.

Unlike traditional meetings, visual facilitation allows a group to discuss lots of information and to capture it so that it's available for the whole group to see. By capturing data, words, diagrams and ideas on the wall, there's a record of what's been discussed so you don't waste time revisiting subjects and you have the information stored to use in future meetings.

The group can then take the data, make connections, and develop a plan.

CONTINUED



unlike searching through documents or spreadsheets the original wall-sized charts can be readily accessed to create the final plan.

Who benefits most from using visual facilitation?

The answer is simple: any group having a meeting that involves producing and discussing a lot of information.

For example, it might be the:

- Senior leadership meeting to set the annual strategy and budget
- Marketing department needing to clarify their message to the marketplace
- Upper level management of a company that is about to move in a new strategic direction
- HR department needing to come up with new procedures in the department
- Nonprofit organization needing to put together a strategic plan to get organized for their future

While visual facilitation brings many benefits to strategic meetings, let's look at three key benefits of visual facilitation in strategic meetings

Benefit #1: Visual facilitation increases clarity and employee engagement overall.

When using visuals in a meeting, people have something to focus on—the content of the meeting. This anchors all the information being discussed while increasing the level of discussion. Participants can refer to earlier points or map out their own ideas with the facilitator to literally make sure everyone is on the same page.

It's easy to feel trapped in a verbal world where all you're doing is discussing very complex issues.

The results of visual facilitation (as you've mapped everything out) can easily be put together as a plan. When the group owns the process, they're more likely to execute the plan.

Statistics prove this:

- Meeting flow: 55%
- Engagement of participants: 65%
- Results: 65%

CONTINUED



Benefit #2: Visual facilitation quickly clarifies complex problems and issues.

It's easy to feel trapped in a verbal world where all you're doing is discussing very complex issues. A lot can get lost in translation from one person to another.

With visual facilitation, you can literally map out a system that you can break down into smaller, easier-to-digest pieces. Then, you can see how the system as a whole might work together.

Benefit #3: Visual facilitation improves communication and lowers confusion.

We all have a filter through which we see the world. Different words have different meanings. On occasion, I've seen two people discussing something, and they were saying the same thing but using different words—the words were getting in the way.

By drawing pictures to explain what somebody is talking about, you increase the communication levels and lower the confusion levels. Pictures can be paired with metaphors and analogies to further enhance understanding. Data can be visualized in graphs and charts to help the numbers tell a story.

If you've never worked this way before, it might be difficult to know what to expect. Think of it this way: using a visual way of facilitating your meeting is a low-risk proposition. You can add the visual component and try it once—you'll still get the results out of the meeting that you expected, and you get to try a new way of having a meeting. If you don't like it, then you don't have to do it again.

What about the cost?

On the cost side, there is a lot of value in working visually. The visual facilitation process significantly increases engagement and understanding—saving time and money.

Also, there's a lot more involved when one person is facilitating the meeting and recording at the same time. The team is getting a lot of bang for the buck if the facilitator and the recorder are the same person.

The visual facilitation process:

- Engages people in a way that traditional meetings do not, making it highly valuable and effective

CONTINUED



For example, if almost all of your leads are converting from an exit popup and not from your e-book download offer, you might want to edit your e-book offer with the effective details in your exit popup. Or let's say you're running a Facebook ad that invites people to sign up for your service with a nice discount but no one is actually doing it. Do you really want to continue spending money on that Facebook ad? Of course not.

Understanding the words, images, offers, and calls to action your ideal customer responds to is the key to creating an effective CRO strategy.

Remember

A great CRO strategy is never finished. It should constantly measure, adjust, repeat. In doing this, you can ensure that your marketing efforts are in tune with your ideal audience and that your investment is converting to high-value leads.

Be prepared to analyze your Google stats every month, and adjust your strategy again and again. In doing this, you will begin to get more out of your digital marketing investment and see more -- and better -- leads in your database.

END



PRESS & PUBLIC RELATIONS



PRESS AND P.R.



venture
smarter

VENTURE SMARTER

Smart Cities influencers.
Event-specific press and public relations.

GOAL


Breakout Smart City advocacy organization hired Melisa to generate and manage press for the group's first regional summit.

RESULT

The organization attracted national and global press, leading to speaker invitations from the US Congress, the United Nations and dozens of Fortune 500 companies.

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SAMPLE

CITY ANNOUNCES RFP FOR SMART MOBILITY APP AT SMART REGIONS CONFERENCE

Several important announcements were made today at the the nation's first Smart Regions Conference, hosted by Cincinnati-based Venture Smarter, an organization aimed at aligning governments, business and academia nationally toward Smart Cities implementations.

The City of Cincinnati announced a request for proposals (RFP) to combine data sets to bring seamless mobility and personalized transit optimization through the development of a web-based, fully mobile-friendly tool.

"Cincinnati is a city of innovators, and we want to harness their knowledge and expertise to drive us forward," said Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley.

City Manager Harry Black added, "The app is intended to be a tool for which every person traveling through Cincinnati may optimize their own, unique mobility experience."

"We're looking to enhance connectivity and mobility as we continue to build Cincinnati into a truly smart city" Black said.

City Manager Black, the Office of Performance and Data Analytics, and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) announced the RFP at the Regional Smart Cities Initiative's Midwest IoT Showcase and Smart Regions Conference held at BB&T Arena on the campus of Northern Kentucky University.

The RFP asks developers to combine transportation data from various providers such as the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA), TANK, Red Bike, and others, into a web-based tool that allows users to personalize trip planning and transit choices.

The goal is to find an innovative solution to promote optimized personal mobility throughout Cincinnati that can serve as a data gathering tool for better understanding the travel patterns of residents and visitors to inform decision making, Black said.

CONTINUED



In a conference session entitled, "Cyber Security in Smart Cities." Cisco Security and Trust Organization's Senior Vice President of Advanced Security Initiatives Greg Akers addressed cyber security threats to cities and regions as part of a conversation addressing the costs and impact of security breaches and natural disasters such as the recent hurricanes.

"Economic, societal, and technological growth are the imperatives for regions of this century. The Internet of Things will be the fuel for this growth. In order to achieve the true potential for Smart Regions, we must build secure infrastructure. Cyber security must be pervasive and built in not bolted on," Akers said.

"Smart regions will be the the platform on which innovation happens. Industry, government and academia will all support and use this platform for growth." Akers said.

Akers, an Internet security and critical infrastructure protection advisor to Cisco customers and the U.S. government, regularly advises and directs activities relative to technology and security matters of domestic and international importance.

"Smart City solutions always do at least one of three things: cut costs, create value, and/or generate revenue. This is why we are meeting here today. It's the foundation of everything we are discussing, and the discipline for creating Smart Cities of the future," said Venture Smarter founder and CEO Zack Huhn.

END





**BRANDING & WEBSITE
DEVELOPMENT**

SMALL BUSINESS BRANDING



GUSTO JAX

Old school Italian restaurant.
Trendy off-beach location.

GOAL

An Italian restaurant owner hired Melisa to transform his outdated strip mall brand into an all-new brand, logo and website, and build a hip social following around the new brand.

RESULT

In under a year, Gusto grew to over 3,000 organic followers. By year two, the successful restaurant had served over 50,000 plates.

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BRAND, WEBSITE, CONTENT & SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN BY MELISA KIRBY

ABOUT PAGE CONTENT

Gusto is your taste of classic Rome in Jacksonville, Florida. Authentic old world Roman dishes prepared by skilled Italian chefs guarantees a delicious experience you won't soon forget.

Our owners, Walter Bianchi and Tonino DiBella, are business partners, close friends and connoisseurs of classically prepared Roman food.

They met in 1997 when Walter moved to Jacksonville. He immediately sought out a team that would allow him to pursue his lifelong passion for what Pele called, "The Beautiful Game," soccer. Tonino was managing the Northeast Florida Soccer League and his own team, Tonino's Azzurri. Walter played with Tonino's teams in the over-30 league until age forced him to move to the over-40 league, and then, alas, to the over-50 league where he still plays.

The friendship between Walter and Tonino is rooted in their love of their home country, its culture, its food and its drink. It is this love that inspired Gusto.

Executive Chef Tonino DiBella made his debut on the Jacksonville food scene in 1986 with the opening of his first restaurant in Jacksonville Beach. Since then, he has opened several successful Italian restaurants throughout Jacksonville, including Tonino's Italian, Tonino's Trattoria, Amici Bistro and Mangia Bistro.

Chef Tonino and Walter invite you to eat, drink and love at Gusto, your taste of Rome in Jax.



WEBSITE COPY



HOLLAND LAW OFFICE

Growing law firm expanding throughout the state.

GOAL


Introduce new website pages and location-centric blog content to help the firm rank in new locations.

RESULT

SEO-savvy content is bumping search results in targeted locations and for new specialty verticals.

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SAMPLE

LOVELAND BANKRUPTCY ATTORNEY LOCATION PAGE CONTENT

Financial stability is the dream of every American. It's also every American's right to pursue the peace and prosperity that comes with financial freedom.

Yes, the pursuit of financial freedom is your right.

At Holland Law, we understand how life's circumstances can sometimes interrupt or destroy a family's financial stability. When this happens, the stress of simply getting from day to day can feel overwhelming or even impossible. This kind of stress can have a devastating effect on a family. Too often, it can lead to divorce, poor health and sometimes, worse.

For small business owners, overwhelming debt can threaten the very life of the business. If the business fails, the family finances follow.

The good news is you don't have to live like this. You can get your financial footing back. You can enjoy peace and prosperity.

In fact, you deserve it.

Holland Law's Loveland bankruptcy attorneys work for you and with you, helping you get control of your financial problems and regain your financial stability. We understand that bad things can happen to good people. We are here to help good people like you get back on track and begin enjoying your life again.

You might be wondering how we can help you out of what seems like an overwhelming situation.

Actually, it's pretty simple. We care about each and every one of our Loveland neighbors, including you. We care about your situation and do everything possible to find the best ways to help you.

We listen to you, we research every potential solution, and put our team of skilled attorneys and paralegals to work on helping you help yourself.

CONTINUED



It's not a fun process, but it is an effective process. And because it is the only type of law we practice, it is our expertise.

If you're considering bankruptcy or simply exploring your options for repairing bad credit, contact us to schedule a Free Bankruptcy Strategy Session. In this free consultation, we will get to know you and your financial realities. We will educate you on Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 bankruptcy options and work with you to identify your recommended best strategies for getting out of debt and getting back on track.

Once you determine your course of action, we'll get to work on your case. With a little work and discipline on your part and ours, you'll be on the path to financial freedom faster than you might think.

Want to know more? Contact us today. We are here to listen, and we are ready to help you regain the financial stability and peace of mind you and your family deserve.

END



SMALL BUSINESS BRANDING



TURNKEY
car concierge

TURNKEY CAR CONCIERGE

High-end automotive sourcing and service business.

Spin-off from established inner-city low income lots.

GOAL

A veteran used vehicle dealership serving poor credit consumers hired Melisa to create a distinctly separate brand for a concierge vehicle buying service targeting high net worth clients.

RESULT

Melisa created a business name, logo and message. She designed etched stainless steel business cards and a polished responsive website with multiple integrations including search, sales funnel, client support funnel and video.

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BRAND, WEBSITE, CONTENT & SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN BY MELISA KIRBY

ABOUT PAGE CONTENT

TURNKEY Car Concierge has been serving discriminating vehicle buyers since 2010. From new luxury vehicles to carefully maintained used vehicles, our job is to understand and meet your requirements for finding and maintaining the car, truck, SUV or motorcycle you desire.

But we don't stop there. We tap into our deep and vast automotive resources around the country in order to negotiate on your behalf for the right vehicles at the most competitive prices.

If you desire financing, we'll help with that, too, working with our preferred lenders to find the very best terms possible.

And because regular and convenient service and maintenance are just as important to your vehicle ownership experience as the vehicle itself, we work with you to ensure all maintenance remains up-to-date. We handle scheduling, pick-up and oversight for your service so you can enjoy your family and work life.

We even provide free loaner vehicles so that caring for your vehicle never becomes a distraction for you.

While we are located in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, home of the PGA Tour and Jacksonville's world famous white sand beaches, we serve clients from all over the country. Our professionals specialize in providing highly personal and discreet vehicle search, selection, acquisition, delivery and service for every client we serve, and look forward to the pleasure of serving you.

Ready to find the perfect vehicle to meet your needs? Give us a call at 904.386.8998 or [click here](#) to begin your search. We're ready to get to work for you.



TESTIMONIALS



HAPPY CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"Melisa's written some blog posts to get me started and it was great! Also, she gave me a few recommendations to improve the value of my blog. Thank you very much!"

- Kevin Brewer, Digital Marketing Manager, WritingWizard

"I can't believe how Melisa took our brand from a strip mall pizza joint to the #1 fine dining Italian restaurant in Jacksonville Beach. She's a miracle worker and a delight to work with."

- Walter Bianchi, Owner, Gusto Jax

"The client sent back comments and they were blown away. They really loved it! You nailed it! I am very impressed at your speed and tone of writing. I will certainly continue to contract you. Thanks for a job very well done."

- Nick Furriss, CEO, Spectrum Jax

"Everyone I have asked in the car business tells me this is the best brand i.d. possible. I've known Melisa a long time but never knew what she did until she worked on my business. I'm truly impressed."

- Eric Lanterman, Owner, TURNKEY Car Concierge

"I have worked with Melisa since the early 1990's on various projects for several businesses. She has handled the research and writing for basically every business project I've had. Her work has made it possible for me to focus on growing my businesses and serving my patients and clients, knowing I can trust her to produce excellent results. I highly recommend her for your projects as well."

- Dean Rottinghaus, DC, President, Medicfusion EMR



MORE HAPPY CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"Melisa did a really outstanding job on the blog articles she wrote for me. She is an excellent writer and her articles were obviously crafted with a lot of care and attention."

- TECHRTR, Author

"I have just had a good read through the content that you have written. You have a lot of good ideas and it's really looking good! :) Thank you for the extra effort that you have made to get it "just right." Your ideas and attention to detail are greatly appreciated. I am very happy with the approach, language level, detail and direction that you have taken. Thank you for all your help, and for your efforts to get everything "just right" for us. Your patience with this project is also greatly appreciated."

- Rod W, Chiropractic Physician

"Melisa Kirby was excellent to work with throughout the years. Her commitment to starting and finishing a project on time and with the utmost professionalism was inspiring. Melisa is a visionary and was always able to lead us from start to finish. Her loyalty to her customers and her focus on quality was always at the forefront of what needed to be accomplished."

- Dr. Edward Lauterbach, EMR Consultant

Melisa is a wordsmith. She cleverly uses her creativity and editing skills to produce an easy read with even the most complex material. She is talented, quick to size up the challenge and produce outstanding results every time.

- Charlyn L, Executive Assistant

"You're the best of the best. You're inspiring me to freelance when I grow up!"

- Sara Hansen, Content Manager, Sting Marketing



HIRE MELISA




CONTACT MELISA



HIRE MELISA TO TELL YOUR BRAND'S STORY

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