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## PR firm is about influencing a community

San Antonio Business Journal - by [Torence White](#)

While some people spend a lifetime doing work they don't enjoy, Lauren Mason feels fortunate that she has been doing something that she loves for the last 12 years.

And that's communications.

Mason has more than a dozen years of public relations and marketing experience working with international public relations agencies, large corporations, emerging companies and nonprofit associations. She enjoys public relations so much, in fact, that she started her own agency, **MasonPR**, in 2003.

MasonPR is a full-service communications agency with expertise that includes marketing and multimedia communications, strategic planning, event management, community relations, and website development.

For Mason, public relations is about influence. This can be achieved, she says, through editorials, advertising, direct mail, special events and more.

"There are lots of different ways to describe this: two-way communication, one-way communication, advocacy, etc., but it boils down to delivering a message to a target audience in order to influence that audience," says Mason, president of MasonPR. "Whether you want the target to buy something, vote for someone, think a certain way, act a certain way, it's all about influence."

### Under the influence

Some of MasonPR's clientele include **Assessment Technologies**, International Academy of Design and Technology, Hill Country Wealth, Hunkydory Paper Products, Sunrise Home Health Services and Dr. Gary White's Gentle Molding Vision Center.

MasonPR's mission is to simply work with their clients.

"I like when we have relationships with clients where we're truly partners," Mason says. "Working with our clients to help them reach and influence their audiences is our main mission."



Torence White/San Antonio Business Journal

Lauren Mason is trying to bring her years of experience working at big PR firms to her small business customers at affordable prices.

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Since 2005, Mason has worked with Assessment Technologies offering business-to-business marketing expertise.

"Our relationship with them has grown stronger over the years and our contacts there now consider us to be the equivalent of their in-house communications staff," Mason says. "It's the highest compliment we can receive from a client to be included on the 'inside of the fence' and being viewed as a partner rather than a vendor."

Michelle Solis, senior vice president of sales and marketing at Assessment Technologies, says she considers MasonPR to be a valuable and important member of their team.

"They are a full-service firm where we can go to coordinate all our marketing aspects," Solis says. "They are very responsive and they look for opportunities to work with our own objectives. I feel comfortable with them that they have the team to get my needs met."

Nancy Corwin of **Keller Williams Realty** Heritage likes that they bring to the table talent and competence, she says, that supports and enhances the best practices for the goals of each client based on their individual needs and requirements.

"MasonPR perceives my success as their own," Corwin says. "As my business grows, I will be able to expand my marketing options and will depend on them to help me. I view it as an ongoing win-win for both sides."

Another client is the San Antonio Recruiting Battalion of the U.S. Army. Its Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Rene Brown says he likes that MasonPR knows how to get the job done.

"They are extremely capable and gifted at what they do," Brown says. "They have integrity and that's what we're looking for. They are a results-oriented company that markets with integrity."

### **Global vision, local advantage**

Prior to starting her own agency, Mason worked at Manning Selvage & Lee as a health care account supervisor where she managed public relations campaigns for biotechnology and consumer health care products.

Mason also worked for Ketchum Public Relations' Washington, D.C., and Atlanta offices, providing issues management and public affairs support.

When she came to San Antonio she decided to launch her own agency because, she says, she had the confidence and desire to build a successful business.

"I was certain I could put my skills and training from some of the world's largest PR firms to good use to help area businesses," she says. "I offer big agency thinking for small agency prices."

In the last three years MasonPR has billed in a range from \$250,000 to \$350,000 per year. Mason says they are on target this year to exceed that range.

To accomplish this, Mason says she will focus on maintaining her current clients, streamlining certain parts of business operations, outsourcing activities that aren't part of their core business, investing in new talent and focusing on their best opportunities in their target industries.

"My goals for development during the next year include adding staff that round out our capabilities and adding diversity to our mix," she says. "The success of the company isn't just based on my experience, but what our whole capabilities are."

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