

Matthew Cunningham

Public Affairs

Veteran public affairs professional with extensive strategic governmental and communications experience, and lattice of regional and statewide relationships. A unique, full-spectrum of public affairs skills born of two-plus decades in the government, campaigns and media.

Areas of Expertise

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Strategic communications | • Writing & social media |
| • Government relations | • Community outreach |
| • Elected officials/Key Influencers | • Social media |
| • Public agency assessment | • Public speaking/Frequent panelist |
| • Opinion outreach strategies | • Coolness under fire |
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Career Highlights

OWNER/PRINCIPAL - PACIFIC STRATEGIES

1998 to Present

Founder and co-owner of Orange County-based public affairs firm serving private and public sector clients and specializing in strategic communications, government relations, social media, community engagement. Responsible for business development, strategy formulation and execution, and client follow-up/follow-through.

Current and past clients include: Irvine Ranch Water District; Eastern Municipal Water District; Orange County Transportation Authority; American Chemistry Council; City of Westminster; City of Anaheim; Tom Tait for Mayor of Anaheim; Anaheim Chamber of Commerce; Children and Families Commission of Orange County; SunCal Companies; Citizens for a Better Newport; Orange County District Attorney; Pat Bates for Supervisor; John Campbell for Assembly; Lincoln Club of Orange County; Jim Silva for Supervisor.

Client successes include:

Irvine Ranch Water District

- Translated district's complex financial strategies and structure into layman's terms for document suitable for re-purposing for various situations – content still being utilized.
- Retained to lead consultant team to develop and implement an integrated public communications and media outreach strategy, and provide ongoing strategic counsel.

Eastern Municipal Water District

- Conducted in-depth assessment of EMWD's public affairs department: its organizational structure, operations, inter-governmental affairs strategy and public communications strategy.
- Generated report offering several dozen specific recommendations for re-structuring and improving the effectiveness of the public affairs department's operations, public outreach and communications, which are now being implemented.

Orange County Transportation Authority

- Serve as Local Government Relations Consultant to Government Relations Department
- Tracking OCTA- and transportation-related issues at the city council and staff level
- Provide general government relations counsel and brief OCTA leadership on political/policy landscape
- Leverage my network of relationships to provide advance intelligence on developments that may impact OCTA projects
- Assist Government Relations Department on special projects.

Children and Families Commission of Orange County

- Managed public relations consultant team providing strategic communications services.
- Executive Director Michael Ruane praised us as "instrumental in developing and executing the social media strategy" and "with writing, message development and positioning."
- Key successes included ongoing effort to influence opinion leaders against diverting Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues into state general fund.

Tom Tait for Mayor of Anaheim

- Successfully stood-up issues outreach and active social media presence for Tom Tait, candidate for mayor of Anaheim (California's 10th largest city).
- Key element in decisive election victory
- Drafted Tait's inaugural State of the City speech, which set down policy priorities and generated substantial media coverage of its central themes.

Del Rio

- Designed/implemented outreach strategy for large in-fill residential development in the City of Orange - on site where previous development proposal failed in face of public opposition
- Generated strong community support and paved way for unanimous approval by both the Planning Commission and City Council.
- One councilmember cited the outreach campaign as a model for developers to emulate.

FOUNDER/EDITOR - REDCOUNTY.COM

2004 to 2011

- Founded "*OC Blog*," the first persistent Orange County political blog.
- Rapidly built into must-read for politicians and policymakers in OC and statewide.
- Acquired in 2007 by *RedCounty.com*, as basis for national network of blogs covering local and regional politics with a national perspective.
- *OC Blog* transformed local coverage of OC politics and strongly influenced the framing of local policy and political issues.

Via my singular experience building OC Blog, I acquired a unique understanding of the power of social media to influence public affairs, as well as its limitations – and a pioneer's insight into best strategies for working with social media and blogs, and how to avoid the psychological traps inherent in online media.

I have been a frequent panelist on the intersection of politics and emerging media at conferences in California and around the country.

ADDITIONAL CAREER EXPERIENCE

Steve Forbes for President: California Press Secretary (1999 to 2000)

Darrell Issa for U.S. Senate: Communications Director (1997 to 1998)

Assembly Speaker Curt Pringle: Deputy Press Secretary (1996 to 1997)

International Jet Sports Boating Association: Government Affairs Manager (1995 to 1996)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

Conference and seminar panelist: regular panelist on politics, government and media at public affairs conferences sponsored by organizations such as:

- South Orange County Economic Coalition
- Orange County Public Affairs Association
- California Association of Realtors
- Heritage Foundation
- Americans for Prosperity
- Marian Bergeson Excellence in Public Service Series
- Lincoln Club of Orange County

Professional & Community Involvement

OC Parks Commission: 2006 to present

- appointed by Supervisor Bill Campbell to represent 3rd Supervisor District.
- Served as Commission Chairman 2008 and 2011.

City of Orange Planning Commission: 2008-2011

- served as Vice Chairman during 2010-2011

Contributor to City Journal/California, published by the influential Manhattan Institute.

Contributor, "The Filter with Fred Roggin," which airs weekly on NBC stations in Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco.

Lincoln Fellow, The Claremont Institute: chosen for the 2012 Lincoln Fellowship Program, a selective week-long seminar on the principles of the American Founding for accomplished professionals working in government, public policy, business, and academia.

"Jeopardy!" Contestant, 1999

Tribal Chief, YMCA of Orange Indian Princess Program

Education

The George Washington University Washington, D.C. 1986
Bachelor of Arts, International Affairs
Concentration in Russian and Eastern European Studies