EXPLORE COMPANY

Chief Brand Officer
Ducks Unlimited

Ducks Unlimited, Inc., seeks to recruit a dynamic leader to serve as Chief Brand Officer, based in Memphis, TN.

About Ducks Unlimited

Ducks Unlimited started in 1937 during the Dust Bowl when North America's drought-plagued waterfowl populations had plunged to unprecedented lows. Determined not to sit idly by a small group of sportsmen joined to form an organization that would come to be known as Ducks Unlimited. Thanks to 90 years of improving the landscape, waterfowl and wetland-dependent bird populations are thriving.

Ducks Unlimited is a leading conservation organization rooted in the traditions of hunting, responsible firearms use, and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, uniting hunters, outdoor enthusiasts, and conservation partners to protect wetlands, waterfowl, and wildlife habitat for generations to come. DU draws its inspiration and support from an extraordinary and expanding base of support. DU boasts more than 730,000 annual contributors and one million supporters powering its conservation mission. In FY25, 31,500 volunteers hosted more than 5,775 events, generating $65.7 million in event income. DU is supported by the Wetlands America Trust, DU's land trust arm which surpassed 500,000 acres in voluntary conservation easements. Over the past 3 years, DU has conserved over one million acres each year. Launched at DU's 86th Annual National Convention in Las Vegas, "Conservation for a Continent" set an audacious goal of raising $3 billion, a target that supporters surpassed, raising $4.06 billion. Building on the foundation of 16 million acres conserved by DU and its partners at the time of the campaign's launch, the effort helped conserve 20 million acres of wetlands and associated habitat, expanding DU's conservation legacy to an extraordinary. From the coasts of Louisiana to the prairies of North Dakota, DU's conservation takes many forms. But each method is science driven and focused on one goal: to improve the landscape for waterfowl, wildlife, and communities.

For more information on Ducks Unlimited, please visit their website: www.ducks.org.

About the Position

Ducks Unlimited seeks an innovative, strategic, and accomplished executive to serve as its Chief Brand Officer (CBO). Based at DU's National Headquarters in Memphis, Tennessee, the CBO will serve as a member of the Senior Leadership Team and will lead the organization's comprehensive brand, marketing, communications, and creative strategy. The CBO will be responsible for strengthening and advancing one of North America's most recognizable conservation brands while ensuring that DU's mission, impact, and voice resonate with existing and emerging audiences. The CBO will lead a talented team of professionals and oversee an annual communications and marketing budget of approximately $10.2 million.

The CBO will work closely with the CEO and Senior Leadership Team, Board members, volunteers, to ensure that DU presents a compelling, consistent, and differentiated brand across every point of engagement. The successful candidate will bring a sophisticated understanding of how brand strategy, communications, marketing, digital engagement, content, media, partnerships, and audience development can work to advance mission and generate organizational growth. The CBO will also collaborate closely with their team as a mentor and coach.

Key Responsibilities and Strategic Priorities

Brand Strategy and Stewardship

- Review and enhance enterprise-wide brand strategy that strengthens Ducks Unlimited' s position as a leading conservation organization.
- Ensure that DU's brand identity, voice, messaging, and visual expression are consistent, compelling, and aligned with its mission and strategic priorities.
- Identify opportunities to expand DU's relevance with new constituencies while deepening engagement among its traditional membership, volunteer, donor, and conservation audiences.
- Continue to leverage and appropriately differentiate the Ducks Unlimited and Wetlands America Trust brands.

Communications and Public Engagement

- Lead an integrated communications strategy encompassing media relations, digital communications, social media, publications, creative services, video, internal communications, and other emerging platforms.
- Develop compelling narratives that communicate DU's conservation impact and connect the organization's work to waterfowl, wildlife, healthy ecosystems, communities, and people.
- Identify emerging issues and opportunities and develop initiative-taking communications strategies to strengthen DU's influence and reputation.
- Continue to develop and expand DU's communication/brand building assets to reach new audiences, including: DU Magazine; WAT Magazine; DU TV; DU Films; Ascend, etc.

Marketing, Membership and Revenue Growth

- Partner with Development, Event Fundraising, Public Policy, Conservation, Corporate Relations, Membership, and other organizational leaders to develop marketing strategies that increase membership, contributed support, corporate partnerships, and other sources of sustainable revenue.
- Use audience insights, market segmentation, research, analytics, and performance metrics to inform marketing and communications strategies.
- Identify opportunities to translate DU's brand strength and audience reach into new partnerships, philanthropic opportunities, and revenue-generating initiatives.
- Provide strategic leadership for DU's digital presence, social media platforms, publications, video, creative services, and other communications channels.
- Expand DU's ability to use digital platforms and compelling storytelling to introduce younger and more diverse audiences to DU's conservation mission.

Organizational Leadership

- Establish clear priorities, accountability, performance measures, and professional development opportunities for the team.
- Develop the leadership capabilities of communications and marketing professionals and create opportunities for advancement and professional growth.
- Serve as a trusted strategic advisor to the CEO and Senior Leadership Team on brand, communications, marketing, reputation, and external engagement.
- Work effectively with DU's volunteer leadership and Board members, recognizing the essential role volunteers play in the organization's culture, fundraising, and public presence.
- Partner across the organization to ensure that communications and marketing strategies support DU's conservation, fundraising, membership, and business objectives.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Attributes

The ideal Chief Brand Officer will be an accomplished brand, marketing, communications, or business leader with the strategic perspective, creativity, executive presence, and relationship-building skills necessary to lead a high-profile national organization.

Professional Experience

- 15 or more years of progressive leadership experience, with a demonstrated record of success leading brand, marketing, communications, business development, or related functions within a complex organization.
- Demonstrated ability to use research, data, analytics, audience segmentation, and performance metrics to inform strategy and measure results.
- Demonstrated success working across an organization to connect brand and communications strategies to broader organizational objectives.
- Experience managing significant budgets and allocating resources against strategic priorities.
- Bachelor's degree or higher in marketing, communications, business, or a related field.

Personal Attributes

- A genuine passion for DU’s values and a pro-hunting and firearms conservation mission.
- Curious about emerging technologies, media, consumer behavior, and communications trends and willing to challenge conventional approaches when appropriate.
- Able to build strong relationships across functions and work effectively with professional staff, volunteers, Board members, donors, partners, and external stakeholders.
- Collegial, trustworthy, transparent, and committed to the highest standards of personal and professional integrity.
- Willingness to travel extensively and participate in evening and weekend meetings and events, as necessary.

Compensation

Ducks Unlimited offers an executive compensation package and an excellent package of health and other employee benefits.

How to apply

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter describing how their skills and background fit this position along with a resume to: Daniel Sherman, President, Explore Company at resumes@explorecompany.com. Refer to DU/CBO in the subject line. No phone inquiries please.

DUCKS UNLIMITED, INC., IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

It is the policy of Ducks Unlimited, Inc. to afford equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, military status, disability, age, or genetic information except where age or gender is a bona fide occupational qualification as allowed by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

All correspondence will remain confidential.