



*Integrated Communications.  
Informed Decisions. Intelligent Client Solutions.*

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**IMPERIUM PUBLIC AFFAIRS (IPA)** is a Texas-based consulting firm specializing in the delivery of political and public policy advice and initiatives to effectively promote and protect client interests. IPA focuses on creating complex public communications and strategic planning for solutions tailored specifically to each client's unique business goals.

Today's political and policymaking environment is shifting radically and rapidly as information travels across platforms and boundaries faster than ever before. Successful organizations can no longer consider government relations, media relations, and public relations as separate functions, but instead must coordinate these distinct messaging efforts.

This is what sets IPA apart as a truly "full service" public affairs firm – our approach is comprehensive and focused on one clear objective – success for our clients. Our broad-based communications experience creates results for our corporate and non-profit clients by integrating communication strategies and successfully engaging key public sector audiences.

## OUR STRENGTHS

### GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

IPA has a keen knowledge of the political process and a strong network of relationships with key policymakers, making our firm effective advocates on behalf of our clients with issues before governmental entities. We base our policy efforts on thorough research, well-developed policy initiatives and well-planned strategies to influence decisions and deliver our clients' needs.

The team at IPA works closely with elected officials at every level of government to provide problem-solving advice on issues affecting their respective constituents. This experience gives us the distinct advantage of understanding what influences and ultimately determines the outcome of public policy decisions.

Additionally, IPA enhances our clients' strategic positioning by developing strong and effective political and electoral strategies to support effective policymakers.

### STRATEGIC AND CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

When clients face competitive circumstances or agenda-driven attacks by opponents, they need clear and concise strategies to respond effectively. IPA prepares and implements message development and delivery plans in high-pressure environments to successfully guide them through these inevitable threats.

### MEDIA AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Effective media relations inform the public of a client's business objectives in a positive, consistent, and credible manner. IPA has existing relationships with key media outlets which maximizes positive coverage and supports public policy and communications initiatives on behalf of our clients.

IPA assists its individual clients in efforts to maintain relationships with its key constituency -- the public it serves. Positioning the organization as a good civic participant and leader in the community enhances that client's reputation and expresses the value of the client to the community, region, and state.

## OUR TEAM

**Michael Grimes** is the founding partner of IPA primarily responsible for supervising strategic communication and issue management services with a core focus on effective and solution-oriented stakeholder engagement on behalf of the firm's select clientele.

Michael possesses a unique blend of education, training, and experience suited for the evolving world of public affairs. He has spent the last 24 years matching his legislative and regulatory knowledge with public relations skills gained while working for policy makers and clients in and around government from both the public and private sectors. These leadership opportunities have honed a keen ability to combine direct advocacy strategies and political campaign tactics to develop successful, proactive issue advocacy campaigns. In addition to building professional credentials throughout his career, Michael also holds a master's degree in Strategic Public Relations from the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Prior to founding IPA in 2010, Michael spent over five years as a Partner and President of Capitol Alliance Public Affairs, a full-service public affairs and political consulting firm representing clients at all levels of government. During his time with Capitol Alliance, Michael established himself as one of the leading strategic communications consultants in the public affairs and political campaign consulting industry in Texas.

Michael's experience in government and policy making include roles with then-Governor George W. Bush in the Division of Budget and Planning engaged in the state and federal budget process, as well as serving as Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for a senior member of the Texas Senate, where he supervised media relations and oversaw the development and implementation of various public policy efforts.

Michael is a native of Fort Worth, Texas. After attending and graduating from TCU and UT Austin, he and his wife Jennifer live in Austin and enjoy an active lifestyle with their two children, daughter Emerson and son Lawson. Michael has given back to his community and his state through service in various organizations, including the Board of Directors of the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Austin Area ([www.bgcaustin.org](http://www.bgcaustin.org)) and the Board of Directors of the Texas Land Conservancy ([www.texaslandconservancy.org](http://www.texaslandconservancy.org)).

As a Founding Partner of IPA, **Trent Townsend** is responsible for advising clients on the legislative process and providing guidance, strategy, and execution of initiatives designed to achieve positive outcomes and desired results in the Texas Capitol.

Prior to forming IPA, Trent managed Texas Senate offices on both sides of the political aisle – first as Legislative Director for Senator Kim Brimer and most recently as Chief of Staff to Senator Kirk Watson. This valuable experience working for both Republicans and Democrats has given Trent an understanding of the differing philosophies of government and public policy objectives and allows him a unique perspective on behalf of his clients.

During Trent's service in the Senate he served as an advisor and general counsel on a variety of issues with emphasis on the state budget, taxes, transportation, telecommunications, the environment, and heavily regulated industries. In addition, Trent spent a two-year legislative cycle serving as the chief advisor to Chairman of the Sunset Advisory Commission, the state entity responsible for reviewing and streamlining state agency functions.

Trent has established a reputation amongst his peers as an honest and hard worker who has built and maintained numerous contacts in state and local government, state agencies, legislative offices, the executive branch, and advocacy organizations. This reputation has carried over into the private sector and to Trent's representation of his clientele before government entities.

Trent is a lifelong resident of Austin, Texas, and is deeply committed to the Austin community. A graduate of TCU and Baylor University School of Law, he is a member in good standing of the State Bar of Texas and serves as a Board member for the Texas Bar's Legislative and Campaign Law Section. He and his wife Ann have two children, Zoe and Connor.

IPA's Chief Operating Officer(COO), [Marti Luparello](#), is focused on strategy, communications, and will continue her "boots on the ground" advocacy efforts on behalf of clients. Marti established her role in the public policy world working in various roles including with former Senator/Agriculture commissioner Todd Staples at the Texas Department of Agriculture and as a key component of his political team on his statewide office's campaign. She then went inside the Capitol where she worked in the Senate office of former Chairman and now Comptroller of Public Accounts, the Honorable Glenn Hegar.

After gaining valuable experience in her state government roles, Marti has flourished in the private sector, most recently as the Director of Government Relations and Compliance for Texas Farm Bureau Insurance companies for the last four legislative sessions. In this role she represented a large P&C insurance company in front of executive, legislative and regulatory policymakers to ensure they were influential in the public policy process.

Marti has returned to IPA where she began her career in public affairs consulting from 2011 to 2014, to serve as COO and coordinate the efforts of the growing team of public affairs professionals. She was raised in Alpine, Texas, and received her B.S. from Texas A&M University. Marti enjoys serving her community and is proud to be a Texas Advisory Council member of NCMEC, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. She and her husband Anthony are the proud parents of two young boys.

IPA's Vice President of Administration and PAC Director, [Sara Allen](#), focuses on the daily operations of the firm and all aspects of political activity on behalf of the executives and clients of the firm. Sara comes to IPA from her most recent role overseeing the administration and marketing of the Texas Medical Association's TEXPAC, one of the largest political action committees in the state and the largest medical association in the country. Prior to her work at TEXPAC, she spent time working in state government for former State Representative John Zerwas as well as a stint working at the Texas Farm Bureau as legislative coordinator.

Sara has experience with policy, political fundraising, and advocacy and will be responsible for collaborating with the IPA executive team to maximize the firm's strong performance-oriented public affairs services. She was raised in Keller, Texas, and is a proud graduate of Texas A&M University where she received a B.A. in Political Science. Sara enjoys volunteering for Austin Pets Alive and has a Labrador-Collie/Heeler mix named, Petey, that keeps her busy outside work.