

Job Description

Director of Digital

About Direct Development

DD is a full-service enrollment marketing agency specializing in higher education. We help schools do the impossible: enroll more students in the face of smaller budgets, fewer team members, and soaring ad costs. Put simply, we help Davids beat Goliaths.

Our approach to enrollment marketing is grounded in a data-driven strategy that balances paid + organic tactics sustainably. We help schools find right-fit students by attracting prospects through valuable content, search optimization, and smart digital advertising. Direct Development is also the only Platinum HubSpot Partner exclusively serving the education space. We think of ourselves as the better alternative to sales-focused vendors who are addicted to vanity metrics; we empower our clients to make smarter marketing decisions based on real data that tracks results to bottom-funnel value. We want to be the partners that help them succeed where other vendors have failed, and to be the trusted advisors they can't live without.

We have a sister agency, Novus, that works exclusively in the non-profit sector. Our team is comprised of mission-driven people from all across the country.

What We Do Incredibly Well

Our team has decades of experience working on the institution-side, in addition to our expertise in content marketing, search engine optimization, digital advertising, brand and creative strategy, and HubSpot onboarding, support, and web development. Our sustainable marketing strategies help our clients spend less and enroll more. It might sound impossible, but that's exactly where we do our best work.

We're Building a Team That is Fixated on These Core Tenets

Treat People Like Family

The foundation of great success is great relationships. We're in the business of partnership, not lip service; this is family

Be Ridiculously Helpful

We help our clients and each other solve big problems. We take seriously the solutions and help offered - we don't settle

Challenge Conventional Thinking

Innovation requires challenging the so-called best practices. We think outside the box in order to stay ahead of the curve

Treasure Transparency

We prioritize transparent conversations in everything we do; with clients and teammates alike, we're radically honest and handle ourselves with kindness and candor

Adapt & Improve

Our team thrives on making improvements that are informed by data and we're committed to prioritizing value over vanity

Make It Fridge-Worthy

We're known for well-thought-out strategies that produce exceptional content and remarkable results — we strive to produce work akin to the one-of-a-kind art projects your parents taped to the fridge with great pride

About the Director of Digital Role

The Director of Digital (DoD) leads DD's Digital team, where digital advertising and digital design operate as one function. Ad, landing page, creative, and conversion path form a single end-to-end process, and this role owns that process from click through to inquiry and application.

This is a leadership role. The person we hire will have deep expertise in digital performance, and they will spend most of their time building the team, the process, and the point of view rather than executing campaigns. Roughly 75% of the role is team leadership, people development, hiring, and operational ownership. The remaining 25% is senior-level strategic consulting across the portfolio.

This role also carries an authority over how the team itself is built. The Director of Digital will assess the current team, determine where each person does their best work, define specializations and seniority levels, identify the gaps, and build the hiring plan that closes them. The right candidate is someone who has built something before, not someone who inherited a team and maintained it.

Role Responsibilities:

Own Digital as a Product

- **Define the Product:** Serve as the owner of DD's digital product, setting the strategy, standards, and quality bar for how advertising, landing pages, and creative work together across every account.
- **Build the Playbooks:** Turn agency strategy into working frameworks, processes, and playbooks the team can run without you in the room.
- **Own the Full Path:** Ad, landing page, form, and follow-up are one funnel. Hold the team accountable for performance across all of it rather than for the quality of any single asset.
- **Support Growth:** Partner with Client Strategy and Business Development on renewals, expansions, and new business. Represent digital in pitches, scoping conversations, and SOW development so that what we sell matches what we can deliver profitably.

Build and Lead the Digital Team

- **Set the Leadership Tone:** Model what great leadership looks like: present, decisive, and accountable. Create an environment where people feel supported, challenged, fulfilled, and invested in.
- **Define How This Team Is Built:** Assess the current team, understand where each person does their best work, and set the structure that maximizes their skillset. This includes specializations, seniority levels, and what advancement looks like within digital.
- **Recruit and Retain:** Identify when capacity is needed, write the roles, run the searches, and make the calls. Build a bench that absorbs growth without eroding quality.
- **Hold a Consistent Cadence:** Biweekly 1:1s with direct reports. Structured goal-setting tied to performance reviews. Regular team rituals that build cohesion across two groups that have historically worked apart.
- **Develop Toward Independence:** Coach each person toward owning their work confidently. The goal is capable practitioners, not dependency on the Director.
- **Manage Performance Directly:** Set clear expectations, track progress, and give timely feedback. Catch quality issues before they become client issues. Celebrate wins publicly and address problems firmly but with care.

Own Digital Performance

- **Hit the Numbers That Matter:** Meet or exceed inquiry, application, and enrollment goals across the digital portfolio. DD's clients evaluate us on enrolled students, not impressions or leads, and the team's definition of success should reflect that.
- **Manage Spend with Discipline:** Keep campaigns within a tight variance of planned pacing and establish standards for allocation and spend transparency that hold up at any scale.

- **Know the Portfolio:** Maintain a current read on performance and pacing across every account, ready to speak to it without preparation.
- **Serve as the Escalation Point:** Be the senior backstop for underperformance, delivery breakdowns, and difficult client conversations. Communicate early when something slips.

Own DD's Forward-Looking Digital POV

- **Be the Voice on Where This Is Going:** Serve as DD's primary perspective on where digital advertising and digital experience are headed, and turn that perspective into a concrete roadmap for the team.
- **Have a Position on Attribution:** Bring a clear view of what works, what is broken, and how to build measurement that reflects real enrollment outcomes in a long, multi-step decision cycle.
- **Have a Position on Search:** Maintain an informed, opinionated view on AI-driven bidding, the shift in how intent is captured, and what AI search means for paid and organic working together.
- **Have a Position on Creative:** Drive the team's thinking on how creative evolves as generative tools mature and platform automation increases.
- **Share It:** Bring that POV to leadership, to clients, and to the market. This role is one of the clearest ways DD's digital expertise becomes visible in higher ed.

Own the Testing and CRO Program

- **Run a Real Testing Roadmap:** Own the quarterly and annual testing plan across creative, messaging, audiences, page structure, and platforms. Every test carries a hypothesis, a plan, and a documented outcome the team learns from.
- **Own Landing Page Testing:** Conversion work is central to this team, not a service add-on. Own the experience from ad click through to inquiry and application.
- **Turn Findings Into Practice:** Convert insights from individual tests into repeatable process, training, and standards across accounts. Individual wins should become team capability.
- **Close the Loop on Creative:** Ensure creative refreshes are driven by prior-quarter test results rather than by calendar or client request.
- **Evaluate New Channels and Tools:** Assess emerging platforms, ad units, and technologies with a critical eye. Advocate for what earns its place and filter out what does not.

Own Reporting, Planning, and Capacity

- **Standardize Reporting:** Build a consistent structure with clear benchmarks and a shared definition of what good looks like. Reports should tell a story, not display a table.
- **Own Data Integrity:** Be accountable for accuracy across the portfolio, whether the data lives in HubSpot, another CRM, or platform-native reporting.
- **Own the Planning Cycle:** Run the annual, quarterly, and monthly digital planning process, including strategy, forecasting, and execution.
- **Manage Capacity:** Partner with the executive team on resource allocation, utilization targets, and coverage planning. Translate account load and budget growth into a clear read on where the team is short.
- **Govern Digital's Project Management:** Partner with Client Operations to build task structures and workflows that put digital into strategic conversations early rather than at the point of execution.

Lead AI Adoption Across the Digital Team

- **Champion Adoption:** Serve as the digital team's primary advocate for AI, identifying and implementing tools that produce real workflow improvement rather than novelty.
- **Run Pilots Properly:** Scope, execute, measure, and share results across the agency.
- **Track the Landscape:** Stay current on platform-native AI across Google, Meta, and programmatic channels, as well as the broader tooling market.

- **Set Guidelines:** Develop and maintain standards for responsible, consistent AI use within digital workflows.

Cross-Team Collaboration

- **Partner with Client Strategy and Client Operations:** Make sure digital has a seat in account planning early rather than at the point of execution, and that scope, timelines, and capacity stay realistic. Client Strategy owns the account plan; digital owns its contribution to it.
- **Collaborate with Content and Tech:** Coordinate on ad copy, page performance, load speed, tracking, and reporting infrastructure. Performance is shared across teams, and this role convenes it.
- **Represent Digital to Leadership:** Communicate team needs, capacity constraints, wins, and risks to DD's executive team. Be the voice of the digital practice in organizational planning.

Ideal Skills & Attributes:

- 8+ years in digital marketing spanning both paid media and digital creative or web, with a track record across multi-million dollar ad portfolios
- 4+ years leading, managing, and growing a digital team, not just inheriting one. Experience leading both advertising and design functions is strongly preferred.
- Experience building teams, processes, and measurement frameworks in environments that did not already have them. We are more interested in someone who has built a practice than someone who has optimized a polished machine that was already running.
- Higher education experience is strongly preferred, whether at an agency serving colleges and universities or in-house at an institution. Familiarity with the enrollment funnel, the admissions cycle, and the way prospective students actually make decisions is a significant advantage.
- Comfort in a long, multi-step, lead-to-enrollment acquisition model where the outcome that matters is months downstream of the click
- A clear, opinionated point of view on where digital is heading: attribution, the evolution of search, and what creative strategy becomes as AI and automation reshape the channel mix
- Fluent enough in both advertising and design to evaluate work, coach practitioners, and hold a high standard, without needing to produce the work yourself
- Demonstrated ability to build operational systems: SOPs, reporting frameworks, QA processes, and workflows that scale
- Strong strategic thinking with the ability to connect digital performance to enrollment outcomes, not just click metrics
- Excellent coaching and people development skills. You should be able to articulate how you have helped a team member grow, not just how you have managed one.
- Proficiency with analytics and reporting tools (Google Analytics, Looker Studio, platform-native reporting) and a bias toward data-informed decision-making
- Clear, confident communicator who can present to clients, lead internal strategy sessions, and write with precision
- Comfortable with ambiguity; able to bring structure and clarity to complex situations
- Positive, solutions-oriented mindset; willing to engage with obstacles constructively
- Highly trustworthy, transparent, and receptive to feedback

Advancement Opportunities:

Senior Director of Digital, VP of Digital

Time & Benefits:

Full-time, salaried position, in a fully remote working environment. Generous healthcare benefits plan, with paid maternity/paternity leave, 401k plan with 4% match.