

Nissan Biography

KATHERINE ZACHARY, VICE PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATIONS

- **Expertise:** Communications, Leadership
- **Location:** Paris, France
- **Languages spoken:** English
- **DOB:** October 1972

Who is Katherine?

Katherine is responsible for all aspects of internal and external communications across the AMIEO region, leading a team of communicators in more than 140 markets. With the overarching mission of modernising and digitising Nissan's internal and external storytelling in the context of current and ongoing trends, Katherine motivates and encourages her team to use new channels and tools to capitalise on this evolving environment. Supporting sales objectives through robust integrated campaigns for Nissan's crossover and electric vehicle lineups, Katherine and her team delivers positive brand narrative stories, manages key issues and crises shaping the business including COVID-19, and leads C-suite communications for senior executives as well as relationships with top-tier influential journalists.

Career History

Katherine has been with Nissan for 16 years in a variety of communications roles working in Europe, Japan and the US. Prior to her current role, Katherine was the Global General Manager for Communications for Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi for the Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) Business Unit. Here she led Nissan brand communications internally and externally for Nissan's trucks, SUVs and vans which account for 20% of the global business, as well as communications around the Alliance's LCV business strategy

Before joining the global team, Katherine was the General Manager for Corporate Communications for Nissan in Europe, where she led communications on corporate, brand and technology topics, developed the Nissan Futures thought-leadership platform, and was the communications lead for long-range strategic planning.

Prior to moving to Europe, Katherine was part of Nissan's North America team. Starting with the company in 2004 as the Midwest Regional Manager for Corporate Communications based in Detroit, Katherine then transitioned to the Corporate & EV Communications team at NNA's headquarters in Tennessee. It was here that she led the successful launch of the Nissan LEAF and served as US national spokesperson on corporate topics.

Before working with Nissan, Katherine was an automotive journalist in her hometown of Detroit.

Achievements

As the first mass-marketed electric vehicle in the world, driving the launch of the original Nissan LEAF was a moment of pride for Katherine. She also says that leading communications for the Alliance LCV Business Unit – which was the first integrated business unit across Renault, Nissan and Mitsubishi – was also a time of significant achievement, saying that it was really interesting to be a part of this from the beginning and watching how it came together.

Katherine is also really proud of what the European communications team has been able to achieve recently. As the team continues to demonstrate the impact of communications

in helping to achieve the objectives of the business, Katherine says the perception and role of communications is shifting significantly.

Personal Memory

Having worked for Nissan for so many years, Katherine says she has lots of great memories that it's hard to choose what has been her favourite! Many of these go back to launching the Nissan LEAF in 2010 – from a parade of LEAFs going across San Francisco's famed Golden Gate Bridge to mark the very first customer delivery to driving a LEAF around the perimeter of Oahu, Hawaii, to demonstrate its range could get anywhere on the island – Katherine remembers this as quite a revolutionary moment in time for the industry. More recently in 2018 in her LCV role, Katherine brought journalists and Nissan trucks from all over the world to drive off-road in the Sahara Desert to demonstrate that the global truck lineup can truly "Go Anywhere". Additionally, Katherine's years in her Alliance role were also highly memorable, with her splitting time between Renault's HQ in France and Nissan's HQ in Yokohama. Experiencing both companies and finding the win-win opportunities for both brands was a challenging but exciting experience.

Why is Nissan different?

Katherine says that her colleagues across the Nissan network are what separate the company from other big brands. She says that every day they come to work ready to throw their hearts and souls into what they do and love rising to a challenge. This ambition, dedication and "nothing is impossible" spirit is true in any Nissan office or facility in the world and Katherine describes the positive energy that results from a culture of problem-solvers and innovators as palpable!

Future Predictions

With exciting new vehicles like the Nissan Ariya coming to market that offer longer ranges, Katherine says a total shift to 100% electrification may come even faster than we think. She says that personal car ownership is here to stay due to the current health pandemic, but that petrol will undoubtedly be a thing of the past.

Additionally, Katherine believes that the automotive industry is on the cusp of a major step-change in terms of diversity. She says that in the last few years there has been more of a recognition of the industry's need to diversify its workforce, but that the discussion has now shifted to more tangible solutions that will lead to building teams that are more reflective of our drivers.

Education

- University of Missouri-Columbia, Bachelor of Journalism, Honors College, cum laude (1990 – 1994)
- Vanderbilt University, Owen Graduate School of Management, Executive Management Programme (2010 – 2011)

In Katherine's Personal Time

In her personal time, Katherine takes an interest in arts, culture and music, and is never without a few books on-the-go. She also enjoys cooking and (still) being a tourist in Paris.

Your current car

While she currently drives a Qashqai, Katherine can't wait to drive an Ariya.

Your first car

Katherine's first car was a 1991 Toyota Tercel.