

# 2012 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

## INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS ENTRY FORM

(Please copy and complete this form for each entry)

Check only ONE entry classification below:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. AAPA Awareness Initiative Messaging _____ | 8. Overall Campaign _____               |
| 2. Advertisements – Single _____             | 9. Periodicals _____                    |
| 3. Advertisements – Series _____             | 10. Promotional/Advocacy Material _____ |
| 4. Annual Reports _____                      | 11. Social/Web-Based Media _____        |
| 5. Audio-Only Presentations _____            | 12. Special Events _____                |
| 6. Directories/Handbooks _____               | 13. Videos _____                        |
| 7. Miscellaneous <u>XX</u> _____             | 14. Visual-Only Presentations _____     |
|  | 15. Websites _____                      |

☒ CATEGORY 1

☐ CATEGORY 2

Entry Title School Boat Tour Program

Port Name Port of Los Angeles

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Please indicate precisely how your port's name should be listed on any award(s) it may win:

Name Port of Los Angeles

Being as precise as possible, please attach a separate entry statement, in English, that:

- **Defines the Communications Challenge or Opportunity**
  - Situation Analysis (*assess major internal and external factors*)
  - Problem Statement (*briefly describe in specific & measurable terms*)
- **Summarizes Planning and Programming**
  - Goals (*summarize desired outcome or end result*)
  - Target Publics (*be specific; list primary and secondary audiences if appropriate*)
  - Objectives (*identify specific and measurable milestones needed to reach goal*)
- **Identifies Actions Taken and Communication Outputs**
  - Strategies (*identify media choices, etc., that require tactics to complete*)
  - Tactics (*specify actions used to carry out strategies*)
  - Implementation Plan (*include timelines, staffing and budget*)
- **Summarizes Evaluation Methods and Communications Outcomes**
  - Evaluation Methods (*describe either formal surveys or anecdotal audience feedback used*)
  - Communications Outcomes (*isolate PR impacts to assess changed opinions, attitudes, behaviors*)

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**School Boat Tour Program** <http://www.portoflosangeles.org/education/sbtp.asp>  
Port of Los Angeles

### Communications Challenge/Opportunity

The Port of Los Angeles (POLA) offers FREE educational boat tours to fifth and sixth grade students in the Los Angeles Unified School District and greater Los Angeles area. The hour-long narrated boat tour offers students a visual perspective of the daily operations at the Port of Los Angeles, the nation's leading containerport and top international freight gateway. The school boat tours traditionally are offered March through June.

The challenge is to find a way to educate and reach as many youth as we possibly can in a way that is positive, visually stimulating, presented in a real world setting and thought-provoking. The City of Los Angeles is huge geographical area to cover with 658 public schools and a school population of 694,288, students. The School Boat Tour program had to be well defined, in accordance with the state learning standards, while nurturing a connection and an understanding of the Port, what transpires there on a daily basis and the connections to their lives while instilling a positive perception of Port of Los Angeles and the maritime industry.

### Planning and Programming

What better way to learn about POLA than from the water? The first step was to contract with a local boat tour service. Based on weather and school schedules, it was determined that offering the boat tours March through June, Monday through Friday, except holidays, at three different time slots: 9 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. would be optimal. The vessel accommodates 149 passengers with open air topside and inside seating below – all connected to a speaker system from which the tour presentation is broadcast. Tours are conducted rain or shine given the flexibility to use the inside area of the boat.

Because of tight school budgets, the Port of Los Angeles also offers a bus subsidy as an incentive to schools to take advantage of the school boat tour program. The bus subsidy aids with paying for the school bus to and from the Port and covers nearly, if not all, of the bus cost. Schools really had a hard time believing that we not only provided a free boat tour but were willing to assist with the bus service.

### Actions Taken & Outputs

Summer high school interns assisted in compiling a mailing list of elementary schools, verifying principal names, teaching staff and contact information.

Target audience: Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) elementary schools, grades 5 and 6. This grade range was chosen because it is the point in the LAUSD curriculum where the students learn about the maritime industry and the Port of Los Angeles.

Secondary audience:

- Parochial schools
- Private schools
- Home schools

An age-appropriate script was developed to provide a general port overview, digestible statistics and fun facts such as: 20,000 Barbie Dolls, 16,000 Teddy Bears or 40,000 iPods (depending on packaging) can fit into a single shipping container.

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In addition to the narration, the students are also given a scavenger hunt/photo page to help them identify sites along the tour route. It keeps them engaged and focused. Many of our students are inner-city children and have never seen the beach, sailed on a boat, or better yet, were even aware that there was a Port in their city. The experience is visually, emotionally and intellectually stimulating.

In October, "Save the Date" post cards are mailed to all Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Elementary Schools as a friendly reminder to place the Port of Los Angeles on their "to do" list and school calendars for Spring. The postcard introduces the school administration personnel to our online booking system, the official opening date, procedures and a contact number for more information. In addition to the LAUSD schools, 232 postcards were sent to parochial and private schools in the Los Angeles area.

In early December, boat tour information packets were mailed to LAUSD elementary schools as well as parochial and private schools. The packets included Port of Los Angeles boat tour overview, logistic information, a "Steppin' Back in Time Historical Map" with a list of other educationally-based stops to visit. Partnering with the Los Angeles Maritime Museum and the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, the Port of Los Angeles included letters and wall posters from both sites to encourage the teachers to make a day of it in San Pedro. With 30 museums and historical monuments within a 10-mile radius, there is a great deal to enhance their maritime experience.

In February, the online booking system officially opened for business. Teachers were able to create passwords, look at the 3-month tour calendar for availability and schedule as necessary. The system design makes the reservation process easier and more efficient.

Confirmations letters were sent and follow-up phone calls were made to ensure schools had their busses reserved correct directions to the dock and received their information packets containing the scavenger hunt check off sheets.

### Outcome and Evaluation

Reservations made via the online booking system during the first week of operation in 2011 increased by 32% over 2010. Teachers booked over the weekend and late in the evening when they had free time rather than attempting to make calls during traditional business hours while they were busy in the classrooms.

In 2011, the Port of Los Angeles hosted 80 schools with nearly 7,000 fifth and sixth grade students at a cost of \$8.32 per student; this includes the tour cost at \$388.00 plus the bus subsidy of \$300 per school, per year.

Upon completion of the boat tour, every teacher was asked to fill out a Boat Tour Evaluation Form and fax it back to the Port of Los Angeles. The Port received 72 evaluation forms with a 98 % excellent rating with confirmations that they would not only recommend the tour to a fellow teacher but planned on attending again next year. The Port of Los Angeles also received hundreds of hand written thank you notes with color pictures of the container ships, sea lions and pelicans from the students. A few of the students' thank you notes have been posted on the Port of Los Angeles website Education page/ scrapbook. Letters and pictures were also presented to the Board of Harbor Commissioners at the monthly meeting.