

2015 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

Please copy and complete this form for each entry.
Create a separate document for answering the five questions below.

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> X </u> _____ | 14. Visual-Only Presentations _____ |
| | 15. Websites _____ |

Please check the appropriate box:

CATEGORY 1 CATEGORY 2 CATEGORY 3

Entry Title 2012-2017 Strategic Plan 2014 Update Brochure

Name of Port Port of Los Angeles

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On separate paper, **FIRST** write a short, descriptive summary of your entry, **THEN**, in as much detail as needed, specifically address each of the following five questions and number your answers. Your answers equal 50% of your score.

- What are/were the entry's specific communications challenges or opportunities?**
 - Describe in specific & measurable terms the situation leading up to creation of this entry.
 - Analyze the major internal and external factors needing to be addressed.
- How does the communication used in this entry complement the organization's overall mission?**
 - Explain the organization's overall mission and how it influenced creation of this entry.
- What were the communications planning and programming components for this entry?**
 - Describe your overall goals or desired results.
 - Describe your objectives and list specific, measurable milestones needed to reach your goals.
 - Identify your primary and secondary audiences in order of importance.
- What actions were taken and what communication outputs were used in this entry?**
 - Explain what strategies were developed to achieve success and why these strategies were chosen.
 - Specify the tactics used (i.e., actions used to carry out your strategies).
 - Detail the implementation plan by including timeline, staffing and outsourcing used.
- What were the communications outcomes from this entry and what evaluation methods were used to assess them?**
 - Describe any formal/ informal surveys used, or anecdotal audience feedback received, that helped in evaluating the success of this entry.
 - If possible, explain how this entry influenced target audience opinions, behaviors, attitudes or actions.

5997

2015 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

Project Name: "2012-2017 Strategic Plan 2014 Update" brochure, Port of Los Angeles
Category: Miscellaneous

Summary

The Port of Los Angeles updated its Strategic Plan with the election of a new mayor and appointment of a new Executive Director.

Communications Challenge/Opportunity

Between 2011 and 2012, the Port of Los Angeles embarked on an extensive Strategic Planning process that led to the creation of a five-year, *Strategic Plan 2012-2017* (enclosed and labelled "original.") In June 2013, a new mayor took office, triggering a year-long overhaul of the board of Harbor Commissioners and management team. By June 2014, four (out of five) new harbor commissioners were appointed, as well as a new executive director.

Naturally, the new board and Executive Director had a different perspective on the existing five-year Strategic Plan. To that end, a series of meetings were held between leadership and staff, and from those meetings emerged a consensus for a more focused Strategic Plan. The seven strategic objectives in the original 2012-2017 plan were refocused and reduced to four. Those four strategic objectives were considerably re-shaped from the original strategic objectives they emulated.

The Communications challenge was to make these substantial changes, midstream into a five-year plan, in a way that did not make it appear that the port was changing its course altogether. The opportunity of the project was to demonstrate that the new board and executive director had the initiative to "sharpen" an original plan in a way that conveyed their desire to place a greater focus on four objectives that they deemed indispensable to future of our organization.

Nexus to the Port's Overall Mission

There is arguably no more important document to an organization than its Strategic Plan. It's not a reflection of the mission, vision and priorities of the organization; it IS the statement of the mission, vision and priorities. To that end, it was extremely important to the new leadership team that this updated document convey a renewed focus and clarity about the most critically important and foundational objectives that will inform all decision-making and guide our organization on a course for success in the coming years.

Planning and Programming

As the team tasked with creating the *2014 Update* publication, the Port of Los Angeles Communications Group was given a number of specific requirements for the end deliverable.

Make it clear and reader-friendly. It was very important that the updated Strategic Plan document be designed and written in a way that was straightforward, undebatable in interpretation, and reader-friendly to a primary audience of port employees (as ambassadors), cargo industry stakeholders and community stakeholders; and a secondary audience of elected leadership (local, state and federal) and the financial community (lenders and bond-rating agencies).

The executive director also wanted us to design a deliverable wherein you would only have to turn a couple pages into the document to see the entire overview of our four Strategic Priorities. To highlight this, we created icons as a design element to correspond with each of the four objectives. As the Strategic Plan is rolled out in town hall meetings and other discussions this month, the icon quadrant is a strong and guiding visual element.

2015 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

Underscore the importance and overall priority of our container business. It was especially important to port leadership that we create a deliverable that would underscore the fact that the containerized cargo business was our undisputable number-one revenue generator. We did this by shortening and tightening the "America's Port" narrative, focusing that narrative on the increasing competition and changing dynamics (alliances) we are facing in the container trade, and using visuals that, in no uncertain terms, positioned the container business as our priority cargo and revenue generator.

For example, the main photo on the cover is a photo of a stack of containers; the photo accompanying Objective #3 – Improved Financial Performance of Port Assets – is a photo of a massive container terminal (and nothing else); a "Cargo Revenue Growth" visual on page 4 depicts a stack of containers as being the a core source of the port's ability to deliver community benefits, port diversity and economic benefits; the facing page of the Objective 3 narrative (p. 14) was, again, another sea of containers; and even the facing page of the Objective 4 narrative (page 16) about "Strong Relationships with Stakeholders" showed a massive containership and terminal in the background of a port-built community park.

Actions Taken & Outputs

The biggest challenge of producing the final deliverable was the process of continually refining and polishing up the copy, layout and visuals. The original plan document was drafted by the port's Planning team, which also initiated the creation of a layout with our Graphics team. Suffice to say, the original work was drastically different in copy length, language/tone, and layout. When it was deemed that Planning could take the project no further, the project moved over to the Communications group to oversee substantial copy and layout changes and ultimately produce an end-deliverable.

This internal development process took place over roughly 60 days and included numerous iterations and rounds of approval. This was possible because the core objectives, initiatives and metrics were established at the start of the updating process and remained intact, so the organization was able to move forward in terms of using those core elements as guiding points for budgeting and policy-making.

The internal team used a freelance writer for editing and proofing the document at a total cost of \$1,178.00. At the time of this award entry, the brochure is being printed at the City of Los Angeles Print Shop at a cost of \$3863.72 for an initial run of 2000 copies. The Plan is also available online and will be shared with stakeholders at upcoming Harbor Commission meetings and through the port web site.

Outcome and Evaluation

The initial run of the document will be passed out at the next quarterly employee town hall meeting on May 19th. Executive Director Gene Seroka wants to use the document to not only inform employees and provide them with an easy-to-use reference tool, but also to engage them as brand ambassadors of the port who fully understand and can articulate the priorities and the business circumstances we face between now and in the coming years.

At the final employee town hall of 2014, the Objectives and Key Initiatives were shared with employees with a request from the Executive Director that each employee think about how they contribute in their jobs to one or more of the Strategic Objectives, and how they can further advance the Plan in terms of interaction with friends, family and other stakeholders.

We are very pleased with this publication and believe that, in hardcopy, it will help port employees and stakeholders clearly understand (and hopefully embrace) the Strategic Objectives of our organization and its new leadership team.