

**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 <u>XX</u>    |
| 5. Audio-Only Presentations _____            | 12. Special Events _____                |
| 6. Directories/Handbooks _____               | 13. Videos _____                        |
| 7. Miscellaneous _____                       | 14. Visual-Only Presentations _____     |
|  | 15. Websites _____                      |

*Please check the appropriate box:*

<input type="checkbox"/> CATEGORY 1	<input type="checkbox"/> CATEGORY 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CATEGORY 3
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Entry Title: Social Media Launch

Name of Port: Georgia Ports Authority

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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.



5300

# GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY

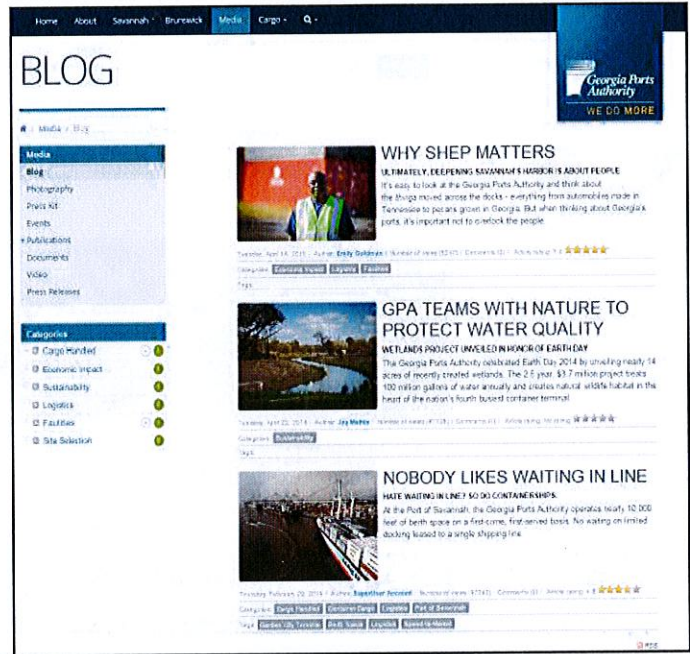
## Social Media Launch

AAPA 2015 Entry Classification: Social/Web based media

### SUMMARY:

With the knowledge that our business partners, customers, members of the media along with legislators and members of our community all have a presence and are often talking about the Georgia Ports Authority, online GPA decided it was time to create a presence in that space in order to lead the online discussion already happening about the GPA.

In July 2014, after almost a year of research and planning, GPA launched a presence on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. In less than a year, GPA has managed to garner an engaged following on all three platforms.



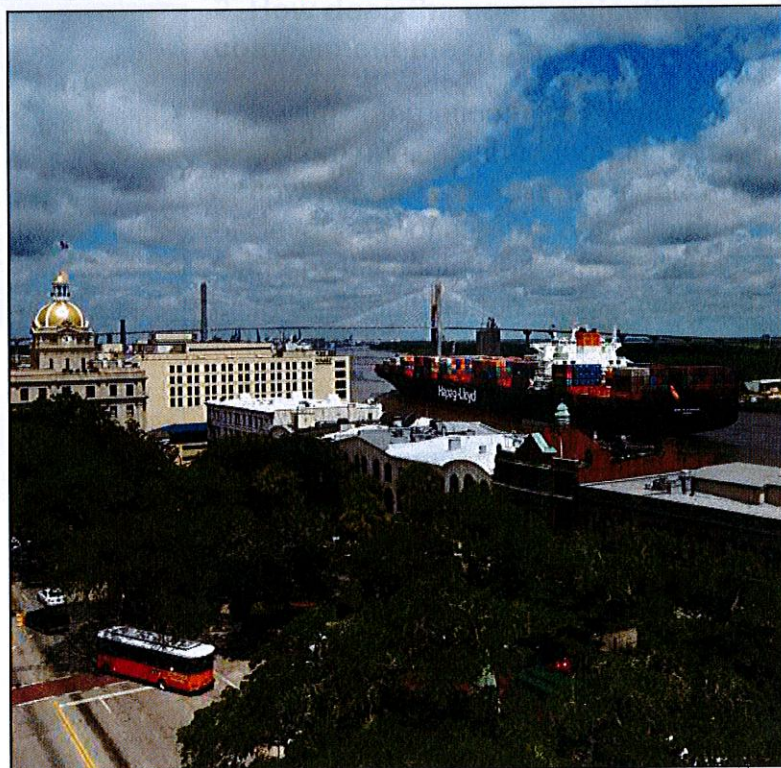
## PLATFORM

**Blog:**  
<http://goo.gl/pZCfL0>

**LinkedIn:**  
<http://goo.gl/pKiCJr>

**Facebook:**  
<http://goo.gl/W1ivTr>

**Twitter:**  
<http://goo.gl/jSBOU3>



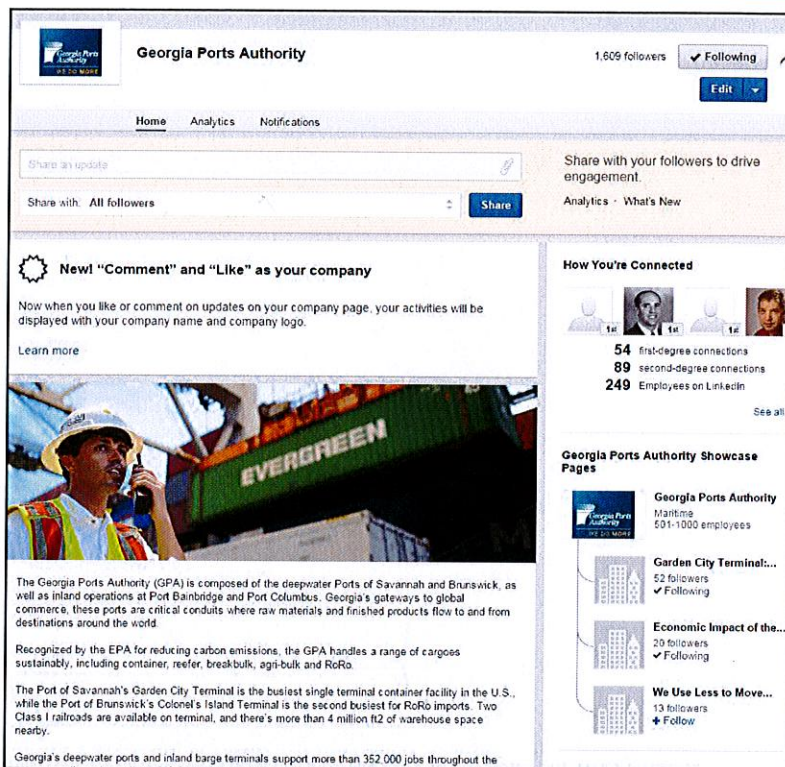
The Port of Savannah is the fourth busiest container port in the nation.



# MISSION

## 1. What are the entry's specific communications challenges or opportunities?

One of the challenges faced with entering the world of social media was convincing leadership of the importance of GPA's presence there. After months of talking about interacting with stakeholders online, the point that really made a difference was illustrating how other businesses, including national brands that are top port customers such as Home Depot and JCB, along with business partners such as KONECRANES use social media to build relationships, provide information to the media and elected officials, as well as encourage interaction with their companies.



# OPPORTUNITIES

## 2. How does the communication used in this entry complement the organization's overall mission?

Fostering international trade and industry for state and local communities, the Georgia Ports Authority operates deepwater ports in Savannah and Brunswick. The Port of Savannah, one of the busiest in the nation, includes Garden City container terminal and Ocean Terminal, handling breakbulk, autos and heavy machinery. The Port of Brunswick also handles automobiles, along with agricultural and forest products. GPA's deepwater ports support more than 352,000 jobs in Georgia and contribute \$18.5 billion in income, \$66.9 billion in revenue and \$2.5 billion in state and local taxes.

Social media is another tool GPA can use to tell the story of its economic impact while promoting milestones of business partners to encourage even further growth in Georgia. It is one more way to interact with legislators and business leaders, the media and members of the community.





# PLANNING

## 3. What were the communications planning and programming components for this entry?

### Goals:

- To lead a public conversation with interested audiences to help them best understand the impact the Georgia Ports Authority has on industry, the economy and community.
- To deliver interesting, unique and relevant online content focused on the fundamentals of logistics and transportation.

### Objectives:

- Inform the public of GPA activities and attributes.

- Educate partners on GPA's effect on the industry.
- Inspire interested parties to seek out more information.
- Listen and participate in the public conversation.

### Target Audiences:

- Each social media channel targets a specific audience.
- The blog, as the backbone for content sharing, has the most general appeal including to the general public and customers.
- Facebook: members of the local community.
- Twitter: Media and legislators
- LinkedIn: business partners and leaders

# ACTIONS

## 4. What actions were taken and what communication outputs were used in this entry?

- GPA's corporate communication team worked with a communications consultant to research and plan a social media strategy.
- A report was compiled on how other ports use social media, including number of posts, content focus, and use of visuals. GPA also researched other companies who successfully use social media, including Home Depot and Maersk.
- After reviewing the initial report, the team created a plan detailing how GPA would use social media and the resources required. The plan included detailed audience segmentation of both customer and non-customer audience bases. The team created sample audiences, and specific personas to gear messages to.
- The team detailed how information will move through social media channels, created an editorial calendar for social media, and planned frequency and topics of posts.
- The team presented all of this information to the senior staff and gained their approval to move forward.
- Demonstrating that logistics companies like Maersk and CMA CGM along with major port customers such as Home Depot use social media to effectively disseminate corporate messaging and interact with the community proved to GPA's executive staff that our presence was needed alongside our peers in the business community.
- All of the social media channels launched on July 28, 2014.
- A corporate communications team of three



# ACTIONS

- creates and curates content for all channels.
- From gaports.com, the blog is a launching pad for big picture pieces relating to the overall economy and industry trends. Information from the blog is shared in different social media channels and directly to customers.
- Ideally a new blog is posted monthly with topics including announcements about new business, infrastructure etc., industry trends, the economy and sustainability.
- Facebook focuses on the relationship between the ports, stakeholders and the community. Content skews heavily to sustainability, education, visuals and human interest.
- Twitter messages are tailored to the media and elected officials, although other audiences listen and participate.
- LinkedIn focuses on business relationships. The posts shared on LinkedIn are useful, timely and provide business-minded people with needed information.
- Budget: \$12,600 for strategic development, creating the blog on Gaports.com and starting each page.

# RESULTS

## 5. What were the communications outcomes from this entry and what evaluation methods were used to assess them?

- In the less than nine months GPA has been using its social media channels, it has garnered nearly 500 likes on Facebook, more than 700 followers on Twitter and more than 1,500 followers on LinkedIn.
- GPA has focused on building quality relationships with a small group of partners online, instead of attempting to interact with a large number of people who are unrelated to the logistics industry.
- Social media has been successfully integrated into GPA's overall communications plan by playing a part in some of our largest campaigns, including the "Why SHEP Matters" campaign.
- It has proved to be a useful place to interact with legislators along with business partners, including carriers such as Maersk and CMA CGM and vendors such as KONECRANE.
- It was also very successfully deployed during the State of the Port event, when members of the media as well as the business community happily used the event's hashtag to post photos of themselves and the speakers at the event, as well as the information presented. On Twitter alone, there were 92 public tweets related to the State of the Port event.
- GPA's social media channels were used successfully as part of the Why SHEP Matters campaign. Two of the campaign posts on LinkedIn garnered more than 1,600 impressions. Two campaign posts on Twitter netted nearly 200 impressions. The campaign was by far most successful on Facebook, which is the audience where we interact with our local community the most. Three campaign posts on Facebook garnered more than 3,800 impressions.

