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 _____
2. Advertisements – Single _____
3. Advertisements – Series _____
4. Annual Reports _____
5. Audio-Only Presentations _____
6. Directories/Handbooks _____
7. Miscellaneous _____

8. Overall Campaign _____
9. Periodicals _____
10. Promotional/Advocacy Material _____
11. Social/Web-Based Media _____
12. Special Events _____
13. Videos _____
14. Visual-Only Presentations _____
15. Websites __X__

Please check the appropriate box: □ **CATEGORY 1**   ☒ **CATEGORY 2**   □ **CATEGORY 3**

Entry Title _www. portofvirginia.com_

Name of Port _Virginia_

Port Address _____

Contact Name/Title _____

Telephone _____ Email Address _____

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.

1. **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.*

2. **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.*

3. **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.*

4. **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.*

5. **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.*

AAPA 2015 ENTRY EXPLANATIONS

Website

website is only part of the entry, nothing attached

Our website, www.portofvirginia.com, was launched on August 4, 2014 after a lengthy redesign and redevelopment process. When the previous version no longer was able to handle the growing influx of customer inquiries and the unwieldy (and widely unnecessary) page count, we sought to sync the new site to our new brand Value system. The new website is a streamlined and more flexible site, capable of expansion and easy to use.

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.

After two years with the existing website being unable to provide a user-friendly experience, we decided to create a new site to handle our multi-faceted duties as The Port of Virginia.

The website was a six month process to create the best and most functional website for our diverse audience – a mixture not only of stakeholders and port partners, but also motor carriers, prospective clients, and the general public. We had to compose a hierarchy of content that could be accessible to these users at any given time.

By painstakingly detailing our website outline and simultaneously ensuring each department's content was well represented, we believe we developed one of the most comprehensive and user-friendly websites inside and outside of our industry.

Analyze the major internal and external factors needing to be addressed.

We had to incorporate feedback from multiple sources within our divisions as well as with our constituents, stakeholders, and partners to make the website as accessible and user-friendly as possible. Who are our audiences? How they each easily access the information they need? How can we keep them informed of the latest events, delays, and emergencies most efficiently? These were questions that we asked of our team throughout the process.

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.

The Port of Virginia focuses on what matters most to our customers, our people, and our region. Every day we deliver superior service, safe transport, and continuous improvement. It's why we get up in the morning, and why The Port of Virginia will keep moving forward.

The website is a crucial piece of our brand identity. It serves as our digital flagship and is one of the most used outlets for information regarding our port activities. To provide the best service to our customers, the website needed to be at the forefront of timely and accurate information that changes along with the current climate.

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

Describe your overall goals or desired results.

Our overall goal was to provide a more streamlined source of information for our primary audience – our port partners, customers, and stakeholders – as well as our secondary audience – political representatives and the community at large. We wanted it to be a robust, user-friendly experience that reflected our new set of core Values accurately.

Describe your objectives and list specific, measurable milestones needed to reach your goals.

While no numerical milestones were set, we expected to see higher unique visitors and longer site visits – both of which occurred upon launch of the new site.

Identify your primary and secondary audiences in order of importance.

Our primary audiences are the organizations involved in the shipping of goods (ship lines, trucking companies and rail companies). Secondary audiences include elected officials and the general public.

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

In April 2014, we hired Sway Creative Labs to assist us in the production, development, and design of the new website. Until the completion of the website, we had weekly meetings with our own departments and at least bi-weekly updates from Sway regarding the progress. We surveyed each department to determine the most important information, filtering the best and eliminating redundant or dated content.

A month before our official launch August 2014, we promoted the launch of a new website via social media teasing "A New Chapter at The Port of Virginia Is Coming" to pique interest and add a sense of mystery to the unveiling. We pushed the tease for four weeks before our site launch Monday at midnight.

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.

The Port of Virginia website became THE source for important and up-to-date information for the audience. We were complemented internally and externally for its ease of use and "user-friendly" interface. With our standout Values on the homepage and a color scheme that nicely complements our logo, portofvirginia.com is helping our audience to embrace our culture.

According to Google Analytics, we went from 209,125 page views in 2013 to 591,445 page views in 2014 – more than doubling our page views. We saw a sharp spike in Sessions right from Day One of the site launch with 1,604 sessions as opposed to the average 400-500 sessions prior to launch.