

2016 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

6138

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

Please check the appropriate box:

CATEGORY 1

CATEGORY 2

CATEGORY 3

Entry Title: Appalachian Regional Port Ad Series

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.

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

- Describe in specific and measurable terms the situation leading up to creation of this entry.
- Briefly analyze the major internal and external factors that need 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 used for this entry?

- Describe the entry's goals or desired results.
- Describe the entry's objectives and list specific, measurable milestones needed to reach its goals.
- Identify the entry's primary and secondary audiences in order of importance.

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

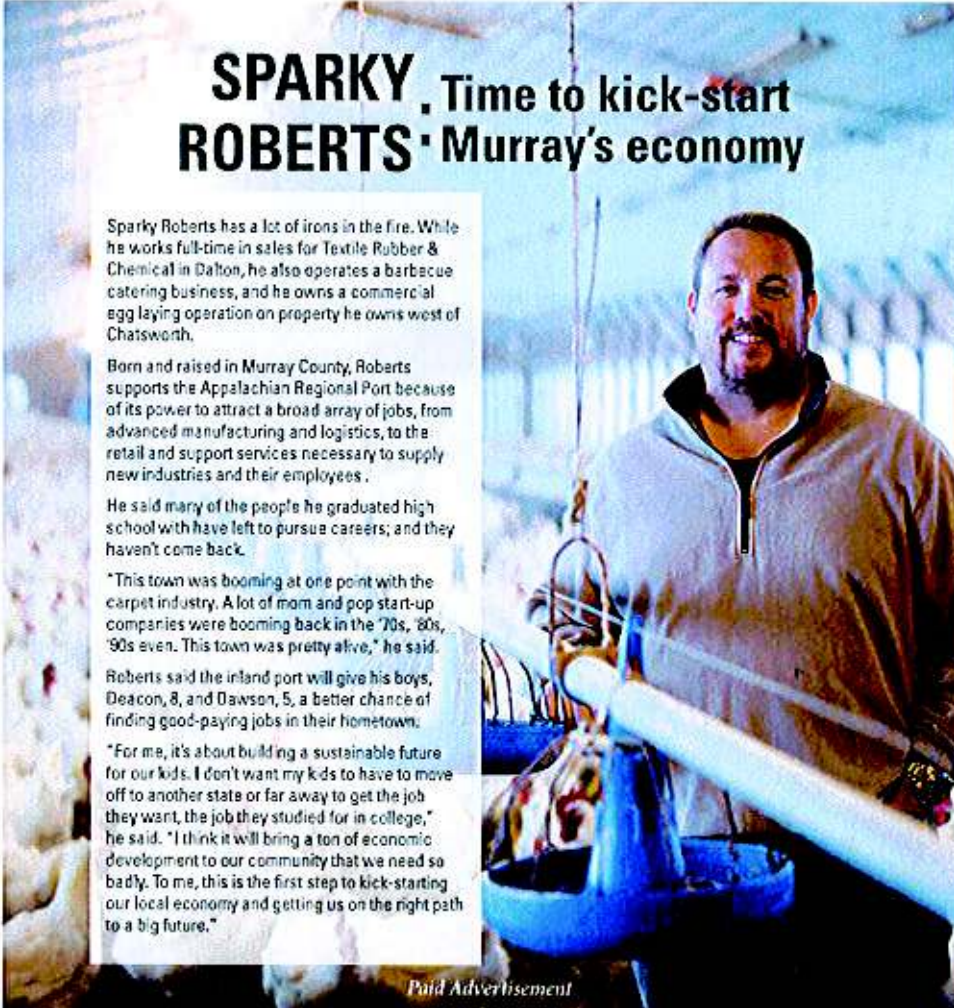
- Explain what strategies were developed to achieve success and why these strategies were chosen.
- Specify the tactics used (i.e., actions used to carry out your strategies).
- Detail the entry's implementation plan by including timeline, staffing and outsourcing used.

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.

GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY

Appalachian Regional Port Ad Series



SPARKY, Time to kick-start
ROBERTS · Murray's economy

Sparky Roberts has a lot of irons in the fire. While he works full-time in sales for Textile Rubber & Chemical in Dalton, he also operates a barbecue catering business, and he owns a commercial egg laying operation on property he owns west of Chatsworth.

Born and raised in Murray County, Roberts supports the Appalachian Regional Port because of its power to attract a broad array of jobs, from advanced manufacturing and logistics, to the retail and support services necessary to supply new industries and their employees.

He said many of the people he graduated high school with have left to pursue careers, and they haven't come back.

"This town was booming at one point with the carpet industry. A lot of mom and pop start-up companies were booming back in the '70s, '80s, '90s even. This town was pretty alive," he said.

Roberts said the inland port will give his boys, Deacon, 8, and Dawson, 5, a better chance of finding good-paying jobs in their hometown.

"For me, it's about building a sustainable future for our kids. I don't want my kids to have to move off to another state or far away to get the job they want, the job they studied for in college," he said. "I think it will bring a ton of economic development to our community that we need so badly. To me, this is the first step to kick-starting our local economy and getting us on the right path to a big future."

Paid Advertisement

Summary: The Appalachian Regional Port advertising series is a series of nine ads showcasing Murray County locals and their support of the new inland terminal, Appalachian Regional Port.

The ads appeared in both the Dalton Daily Citizen and the Chatsworth Times, the two local newspapers serving Murray County.

Challenge:
Give voice to
the majority of
Murray County
residents who
support the
Appalachian
Regional Port.

1) Challenge and Opportunity

After the announcement that the Georgia Ports Authority planned, along with the state of Georgia and rail provider CSX Transportation, to open an inland port in Murray County, Ga., two camps developed within the county.

The first camp supports the inland port because of its potential to bring employment and investment to the county, which will allow young people to find good jobs without having to move away.

In time, however, a second, smaller camp developed: Those opposed to the inland port on the grounds that it would bring about negative change to the bucolic setting of Chatsworth, Ga.

To quote the Atlanta Journal Constitution, those opposed to the project have “established a nonprofit to fight the project, hired an Atlanta attorney, enlisted environmental groups, created a Facebook page with 276 friends, convened town hall meetings and filed open records requests seeking evidence of official shenanigans in the site’s selection.”

A petition at change.org titled “Stop Murray County Georgia Inland Port” has 427 supporters.

While those who oppose the inland port are vocal, they are very much in the minority. Murray County was hard hit by the Great Recession, with carpet factories shuttered, jobs lost and a stagnant economy showing little sign of rejuvenation. Many local residents believe the inland port can breathe new life into Murray County.

The central challenge of this entry was to counter the negative sentiment and misinformation being spread by the inland port’s detractors, and to give voice to the majority of Murray County residents who back the project.

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Appalachian Regional Port Ad Series

GPA's overall mission is to support economic development across Georgia.

2) Connection to GPA Mission

GPA's overall mission is to support economic development across Georgia. While it is unlikely for a small but vocal group to scuttle the Chatsworth project, we feel it is in the long-term best interest of the project – and the economic development of Murray County – if we address unhappy neighbors and answer questions they have raised in the community.

The advertising campaign was developed in conjunction with a series of one-on-one meetings and large community meetings.

By raising the profile of hometown supporters of the inland port, the ad campaign helped to smooth the way forward for the rail project.

3) Planning and Programming

Goals:

The goals at the outset of the campaign were to find compelling voices in support of the inland port, and to share supporters' stories within the local media in order to educate the undecided residents of Murray County on the actual economic and environmental impacts of the proposed Appalachian Regional Port.

Objective:

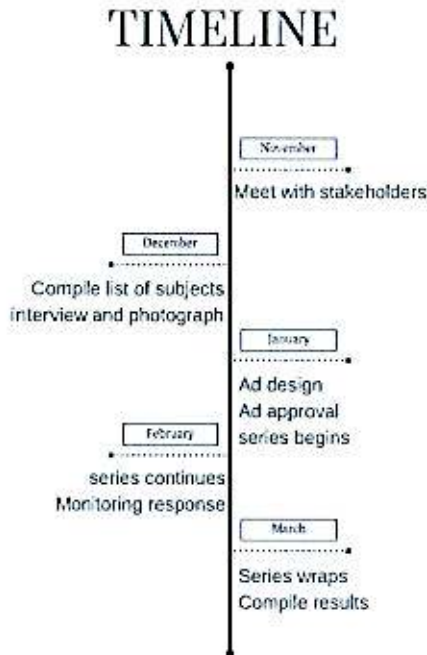
To share information with area residents, garnering at least 100,000 impressions over the life of the ad campaign.

Target Audience:

The primary target audience included people who were aware of the proposed Appalachian Regional Port, but were not yet decided in their support of the project.

Secondarily, GPA wanted to support those residents who already backed the inland port with facts and anecdotal evidence which would serve to reinforce their support and aid them in refuting misinformation.

4) Actions and Outputs



The first objective was to develop a list of different types of folks, both blue- and white-collar representatives, who were trusted individuals within the community. With the help of local government and business officials, we developed this list, which included:

- The local barber who has cut generations of students' hair at his shop across the street from the high school.
- A young family man who is assistant general manager of the local water utility.
- The self-made owner-operator of a trucking company serving the flooring industry.
- The owner of a specialty organic chemical company with global operations.
- The retired founder of one of the area's first carpet mills – a cornerstone industry for the area.
- The president of the Conasauga River Alliance, a conservation group.
- A native of the county who has to work in a neighboring community, but also owns an egg-laying operation within Murray County.
- A high school career counselor tasked with helping students find internships and jobs.
- President of a growing flooring company who believes the inland port will help make his products more competitive overseas.

Upon developing a list of proposed subjects, we reached out to them to set up interviews and photo shoots. A writer and a photographer were dispatched from Savannah to meet with supporters over a two-day period to gather photos and information.

Straightforward newspaper ads were developed, featuring vertical images

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Appalachian Regional Port Ad Series

Staffing:

1 staff writer

1 staff photographer

1 staff designer

of the supporters, facing the camera, within their working environments.

Formatted similarly to news stories, the articles gave profile information on the subjects and the details of why they support the Appalachian Regional Port.

An in-house designer at GPA laid out the ads.

The series of nine ads ran weekly, appearing in both the Dalton Daily Citizen – the daily paper taken by most Murray County residents – and the Chatsworth Times, the local weekly. Publication dates ran from Jan. 6 through March 2, 2016.

5) Results

Circulation at the Dalton Daily Citizen is reported at 11,377 daily, while the Chatsworth Times reaches 5,000 readers weekly. By running advertisements in both publications over a nine-week period, the ad campaign garnered more than 147,000 impressions.

GPA's outreach effort, including the ad campaign, has had a real impact on the community's perception of the Appalachian Regional Port project.

To assess the impact of the ad campaign, we monitored news coverage and online comments.

On Feb. 16, 2016, after reporting on a new industry that announced plans to come to Murray County, the Dalton Daily Citizen ran an editorial titled, "Our View: Murray port already making a difference."

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Appalachian Regional Port Ad Series

“The port is an amazing opportunity that will attract other businesses to come in and also provide high skilled jobs.”

-Kendra Evans,
Chatsworth, GA

Online comments include the following:

“The port is an amazing opportunity that will attract other businesses to come in and also provide high skilled jobs. The Savannah Port is a highly organized operation that connects Georgia to the world with the global economy. Murray County has the opportunity to be a part of that.”

Kendra Evans, Chatsworth, GA

“It is an incredible opportunity to diversify our economy. I understand that everything, every issue has both positive and negative aspects, and I believe that the positive possibilities provided by the port surpass any negative aspects by a huge, huge margin.”

Michael Baxter, Tennega, GA

“I believe this will be a great addition to our county. We need our county to grow for our next generation. I am excited to see this happen for Murray County.”

Celia Headrick, Chatsworth, GA