

# 2016 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

## INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

6111

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  | _____ | 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                      | <u>  X  </u> |

Please check the appropriate box:

☐ CATEGORY 1

☒ CATEGORY 2

☐ CATEGORY 3

Entry Title www.PortsofIndiana.com

Name of Port Ports of Indiana

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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.

# Ports of Indiana Website Entry Statement

The newly-redesigned website [www.portsofindiana.com](http://www.portsofindiana.com) serves as the premier marketing tool for the Ports of Indiana. The updated site launched in February 2016.

## 1. Communications Challenge/Opportunities

**Situation Analysis:** We are a statewide port authority with three ports located as far as a 6-hour drive apart. Our corporate headquarters is in downtown Indianapolis (at least 2 hours from water in all directions); it is impossible for anyone to physically stand on a dock and see all of our port operations. In fact, most of Indiana's businesses and population are not located near water, so the website is even more important because it is the only place they can really get a complete overview of everything we do. Due to the distance between and diversity of our ports, we use the website to "bring it all together," showing our target audiences how each individual port is a component of a broader economic engine that stretches across the entire state of Indiana.



In early 2016, we completed a redesign of the website, which went live on Feb. 22. With the new design, we strived to make the site more visually appealing and easily navigated. We added new sections to better highlight our core services and expanded the media center.

## 2. Communicating the Ports of Indiana's Mission

Since 1961, the Ports of Indiana has been a valuable asset to the state of Indiana. The self-funded enterprise generates significant economic development by creating jobs, attracting businesses to the state and providing access to global markets. Its management team brings an entrepreneurial approach to the organization that invites opportunities and strategies for expansion, self-sufficiency and innovation.

*Our Mission: "To develop and maintain a world-class port system that operates as an agile, strategically-driven, self-funded enterprise dedicated to growing Indiana's economy."*

From a marketing perspective, the website is the first tool in maintaining market visibility. In today's web-based society, it is the first place people look to research the Ports of Indiana. The website serves as the entry-level piece for anyone looking for information, but also offers deeper information for those who would like to learn more.

### 3. Planning and Programming

**Goals:** The goal of the website is to serve as the primary “portal” or entry point for our entire Ports of Indiana system. It is the main marketing piece that brings our very diverse and expansive system of ports all together for public view under one brand and one corporate structure. We use it to market our port resources and our tenant companies, which we do through substantial background information, maps, printable brochures, tenant information and more.

The website must reflect the broad range of capabilities, services and activities of the Ports of Indiana.

**Objectives:** Our main objectives for the website are:

- To provide an overview of the three Ports of Indiana.
  - The website redesign brings each port to the forefront with color-coded graphics and links along the left side of the page. (Links to each port’s section can also be found along the top of the page in the “Ports” drop-down menu.)
  - The main page for each port includes a brief video summary of the port. (At this time, however, the video for the Port of Indiana-Mount Vernon is under development.)
  - Each port’s section has been expanded to include a port overview, map, real estate information, cargo information, a port directory and additional resources.
- To inform our audience of notable current events.
  - The two most recent news items are found on the main page, just below the scrolling header.
  - The new media center pulls the three most recent news pieces to the front and center. It also includes a news archive, photo gallery, publications, research materials and more.
- To generate business for our ports and port companies.
  - The new Real Estate section highlights available properties at each of the ports, with maps and other property information. It also includes all pertinent information site selectors need regarding economic development partners, requirements and more.
  - Port companies are highlighted in the Port Directories with brief descriptions and contact information for each company, on the Port Map and within the cargo section.
- To provide a resource for key issues related to our ports.
  - We added a completely new section to the website: Community & Environment. This section includes information on economic impact, education and environmental programs regarding the ports and waterborne shipping.



- o The media center now has a Research section, which highlights studies involving the waterborne shipping's safety, environmental and economic impact statistics.

**Target Audiences:** The target audiences for our website includes:

- Current port tenants and customers
- Prospective customers looking to locate at or use our ports
- Media
- Government officials
- Port communities' leaders
- Economic development partners



As a secondary focus, it is also geared toward the general public and those without any previous contact or knowledge of the Ports of Indiana.

#### 4. Actions and Communication Outputs

##### Strategies:

We need the site to fully-encompass the activities of the Ports of Indiana, yet be easily-navigated and user-friendly for both those viewing the site and our small staff. Our primary strategy is to provide simple answers to the reoccurring question: "Indiana has ports?" One of our goals is to include a comprehensive description of the organization and its various functions for those who are not at all familiar with our ports or ports in general (government, community leaders, businesses that don't currently ship by water, general public) and to do it in a easy-to-understand format.

The organization is multifaceted and offers a broad scope of services. A challenge in creating the new website involved breaking these down into a clear, concise, well-navigated site where information could be found easily.

##### Tactics:

We needed navigation on the new site to be instinctive. On the homepage we highlight our organization's five primary focuses: each of the three ports, real estate and cargo. These feature a graphic link along the left hand side of the page for quick navigation. All of the sections, (Ports, Business Services, Media Center, Community & Environment, About Us and Contact) run across the top of the pages, for easy navigation between sections.

Content throughout the site was rewritten to be more concise and web-friendly. The new design also incorporates more photos and graphics.

Ports of Indiana staff now manages the daily upkeep of the site. To keep things simple, and avoid the need to update numerous pages for one statistic, one page can be linked to from multiple pages. For example, the main Cargo page is linked to from the homepage cargo graphic, business services and each of the ports' pages. This allows us to keep the site updated without having to weed page by page through the site, updating many references.

### Implementation Plan:

The Ports of Indiana website is designed and maintained by a combination of in-house staff and an outside vendor. The launch of the new site cost roughly \$7,000. With the redesign, staff can now update the website directly. Previously, staff created content and sent it to an outside webmaster to update. The new process is faster and more cost-effective, reducing the website updating expenses by roughly \$1,500 per year.

We aggressively promote the site by including the web address on a variety of our promotional materials and on all of our publications. Every presentation we give incorporates the address, driving new groups to the site. The link is also included on all press releases, emails and any information distributed by our organization.



## 5. Evaluations Methods and Communications Outcomes

We evaluate the success of the site through a stakeholder survey and general website analytics.

In a 2016 survey, participants gave the new website an average overall rating of 4.57, on a 5-point scale with five being high. They were asked to rate more specific categories as well: Design and Appearance (4.5), Loading Speed (4.5), Ease of Navigation (4.63), Quality of Information (4.5) and Functionality (4.63). When asked which features are most useful, the top five responses were Port Information (100%), Contract Information (75%), Press Releases (62.5%), Port Photos (62.5%) and Port Maps (62.5%).

Comments included:

- "I thought the site was attractive, informative and easy to navigate."
- "All the information (from contacts to maps to links to tenants) is very easily available."
- "Visually, it is very appealing."
- "This website seems to have improved greatly from its earlier appearance."

The site launched on Feb. 22, 2016, so our analytics are limited to comparing the two-month period (Feb. 24-April 24) with the previous year. The number of unique pageviews increased by over 30 percent during this time. Number of users stayed roughly the same, but the average session duration dropped by 40 percent. We feel this is due to the improved navigation of the site, where users can find the information they need easily, thus spending less time navigating.

We have also significantly reduced printing costs for our main marketing brochures and magazine by posting them online. We still have some print costs for the brochures but they are not on an annual basis and we have eliminated delivery costs and postage now that our ports and potential customers can access every marketing brochure online.

The website [www.portsofindiana.com](http://www.portsofindiana.com) is the Ports of Indiana's primary marketing tool bringing together all the facets of our three-port system. Our new design allows users to intuitively navigate the site. It is the flagship of our marketing efforts and it is something all of our employees take great pride in showing off to their contacts, associates, prospects and friends.