

# 2016 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

## INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

6179

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        | <u>X</u> |
| 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

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Entry Title Port of Los Angeles Instameet: #MeetThePortofLA

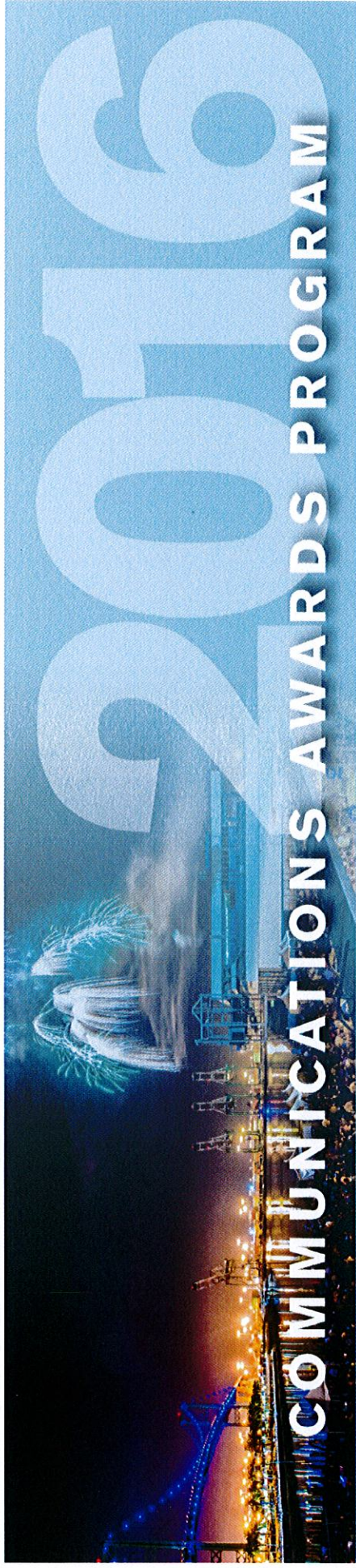
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# Port of Los Angeles

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## Instameet:

# #MeetThePortofLA

## Social/Web-Based Media





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### Port of Los Angeles Instameet: #MeetThePortofLA *Port of Los Angeles*



The Port of Los Angeles has a significant presence on social media, both under our namesake business brand, *Port of LA*, and travel/tourism brand, *LA Waterfront*. For this entry, we'd like to focus on Instagram and a campaign we specifically tailored for that audience. Instagram is a mobile, social media platform that enables users to take photos and videos directly from their smartphones. The Port of Los Angeles has more than 7,000 combined followers on its [@portofla](#) and [@lawaterfront](#) Instagram accounts – more than any other port in the world. Instagrammers are part of a highly engaged audience who enjoy taking and seeing high quality photos. Users thrive on their photos being featured.



#### ***What is an Instameet?***

People in the Instagram community will sometimes meet offline to connect, take photos together, and inspire one another in real-world meet-ups known as Instameets. Since the Port of Los Angeles is a photographer's dream, we hosted a sunset boat tour to offer our followers access to some of the Port's most photogenic, yet hard-to-reach places. Based on our research, it's safe to say we are the first City of Los Angeles agency and first port to host an official Instameet.

❖ Please view accompanying short, two-minute video recapping the event. ❖

### **Communications Challenge/Opportunity**

Located in Los Angeles County, are the cities of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Located in San Pedro Bay, are the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Needless to say, it gets confusing. To the untrained eye, when looking at a photo of the Port of Los Angeles or Port of Long Beach, it might be hard to tell the difference. So when Joe Citizen posts a photo of the Port of Long Beach and tags it #PortofLA, everyone is going to think Joe knows best. Clearly, Joe took the photo so he should know where he is, right? Well, not always. When we had the opportunity to meet some of the Instagrammers personally at the Instameet, it became our mission to educate and inform them of some of the easy and subtle ways to tell the ports apart. For the most part, it was successful. And people were happy to be in the know and recognize little tips and tricks for telling the ports apart. Only one person tagged their tour photo with #MeetThePortofLA and #longbeach. What can we say? There's one in every crowd...

### **Nexus to the Port's Overall Mission**

We are sometimes asked, "Why does a port need to be active on social media?" One of the objectives in the Port of Los Angeles Strategic Plan is building strong relationships with stakeholders, including local communities. Instagram supports this mission because the engagement isn't one-way. Users don't comment to what they feel is the equivalent of a brick wall.



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They realize there is an actual human being doing the posting from a phone. Relationships take work, and one of the ways you can always improve your relationship is by listening – easily demonstrated without even interacting with user. Instagram allows people to publicly share moments of their everyday lives. Instagram is unlike Facebook where most users have privacy tools enforced. So if someone has a good day, or a bad day at the Port of Los Angeles or on the LA Waterfront and posts about it, we want to know about it. Also, studies show 80% of social media users are on a mobile device and mobile use now exceeds desktop use. By launching a communications program targeted to a mobile-only audience, the Port of Los Angeles is trying to stay a step ahead of the game.



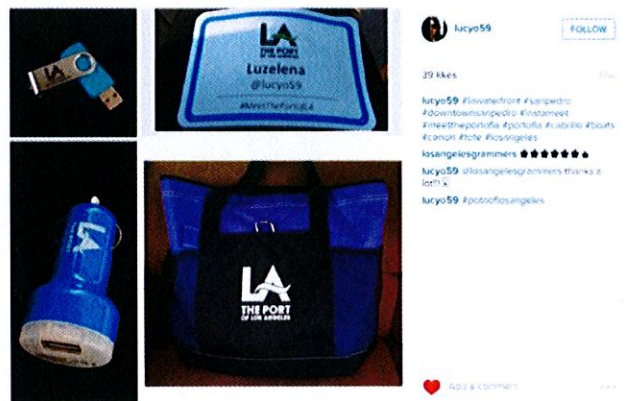
### Planning and Programming

The idea behind hosting an Instameet was inspired by local Instagrammers. Many users already take captivating images of the Port of Los Angeles and LA Waterfront using the hashtags #PortofLA and #LAWaterfront, respectively, so there was clearly an established interest in photography with our location as the subject. Looking through these photos, we soon realized a small community of local users was taking these photos together. Why not introduce them to other like-minded photographers and give them a tour they'd never forget? And with that, the Instameet was born.

What started as a meet-up for Instagram quickly morphed into a full-scale, professional photographer conference. We had 120 people RSVP, and in verifying their public profiles, we could tell right away this wasn't an ordinary crowd. Some of our followers have more followers than we do – with audiences into the thousands. On the day of the event, nearly 90 participants showed up, nearly all of whom had expensive camera equipment in tow. Many of the tour participants stayed in town and had dinner on the LA Waterfront after the tour, posting pictures with some of the new friends they met earlier that same evening.

### Instameet Goals:

1. Increase brand awareness for the Port of Los Angeles and LA Waterfront on social media. (This was easily tracked by the number of hashtags used after event.)
2. Increase number of followers by 100 on each Instagram account by the end of summer.
3. Educate and inform audience about the diverse Los Angeles Harbor communities of San Pedro and Wilmington.



It's important to note there was next to no budget for this event. The cost of the boat tour was already included in the Communications Division boat tour reservation budget, which includes the distribution of promotional items. No additional costs were incurred.

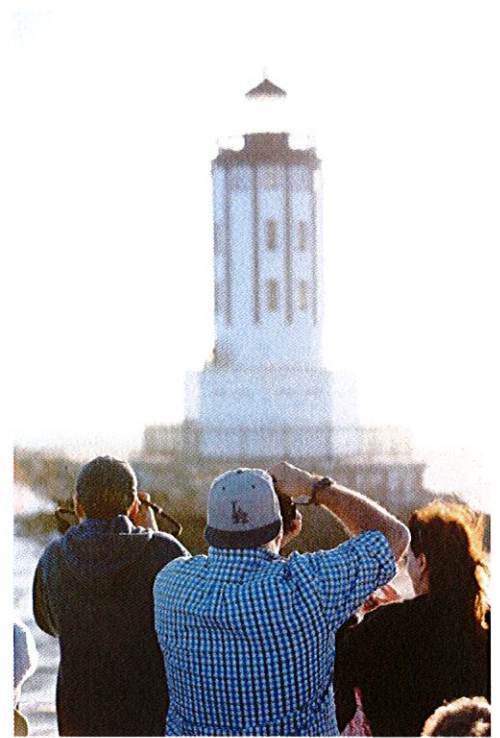


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### Actions Taken and Outputs

First, we rescheduled a standing afternoon tour to a sunset boat tour, departing at 6 p.m. to allow for the best photos during the golden hour. Most boat tours are held in the daytime, so the sunset lighting already set this tour apart from the rest. We planned a route a little differently from our standard tours, and veered off track to visit something most people don't get to see up close: Angels Gate Lighthouse, a historic landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

We then used other Port of Los Angeles and LA Waterfront social channels to announce the event, including Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest. Since the Instameet was planned by one full-time staff member with the help of a few summer interns, we enlisted the help of a few social-media savvy employees to act as ambassadors to both promote and participate in the event. By creating a unique hashtag for the Instameet, #MeetThePortofLA, we wanted to distinguish between photos tagged #PortofLA on an everyday basis. We also created a graphic with overlaid text of the location, time, date, hashtag and logos, and included an RSVP email to gauge attendance. We called out power users via @mentions, inviting them personally. Most of these users were thrilled to be invited and invited a friend to come along.



### Outcome and Evaluation

After the event, about 450 photos were shared using the unique hashtag #MeetThePortofLA, which averages to about five images posted per person. That number increases by the day. Anyone on Instagram can see these by searching the hashtag #MeetThePortofLA. We have gained approximately 400 new followers on both Instagram accounts as a result of this campaign. After the

success and excitement that came with hosting the first Instameet in August 2015, we held a second Instameet in April 2016 that departed from another less popular, public dock at the Port of Los Angeles, introducing people to a whole new side of L.A. Since that Instameet was held on April Fool's Day, we'd pre-arranged for the Los Angeles Fire Department to give them a special fireboat display show. It didn't disappoint, and even yielded a rainbow, which was later featured on ABC and NBC news!





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### Media Coverage

In addition to sending a photographer to joining the Instameet, the Daily Breeze posted an online photo gallery and full-page coverage of the event in the print version of the newspaper.

### Public Outreach

There was no shortage of enthusiasm among Instameet participants. In addition to giving participants a Port of Los Angeles promotional goodie bag, we gave prizes for three categories: first person to RSVP, first person to post a photo using the unique hashtag #MeetThePortofLA, and farthest traveler. Since we received our first RSVP within minutes of announcing event, we thought it would be nice to recognize that individual. The first hashtag went up even before the boat left the dock. The farthest traveler came from San Diego – a two-hour drive from Los Angeles. Not to be outdone on our second Instameet, our farthest traveler came from Germany! Now, more fans in Europe can virtually “Meet the Port of LA.”

### Board Recognition

When it comes to social media, and particularly hosting an event for a newer platform such as Instagram, most people are left scratching their heads. Hosting this Instameet took the Port's social Media Program to a new level of visibility and recognition among our employees, executive team, and board. It gets better: Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti who is extremely active on Instagram texted the Port's chief of staff just to say our event looked “very cool.” With that, our Media Relations Division gave a presentation to the Los Angeles Board of Commissioners, recapping the event and overall social media program.

