

2016 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

6173

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Check only ONE entry classification below:

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| 1. Advertisements – Single | _____ | 8. Overall Campaign | ___X___ |
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CATEGORY 1

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Entry Title Port of Los Angeles Welcomes Largest Cargo Ship to Ever Visit North America

Name of Port Port of Los Angeles

Port Address 425 S. Palos Verdes St., San Pedro, CA 90731

Contact Name/Title Theresa Adams Lopez

Telephone 310-732-3507 Email Address tadams-lopez@portla.org



Port of Los Angeles

Port of Los Angeles
Welcomes Largest Cargo
Ship to Ever Visit North
America

Overall Campaign



[Click Here to Watch Video](#)

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Project Name: Port of Los Angeles Welcomes Largest Cargo Ship to ever Visit North America
Port of Los Angeles

Brief description:

It's the day after Christmas and at the crack of dawn, when most people are still asleep, Port of Los Angeles Communications Team members were up in preparation for the arrival of the 18,000-TEU CMA CGM Benjamin Franklin, the largest container ship to ever visit North America. As the busiest container port in North America, it was an honor to host this vessel's first U.S. call and demonstrate that our terminals are "big ship ready." This was an especially important call for the Port of Los Angeles because CMA CGM is not a Port of Los Angeles customer. In fact, it owns a stake in a terminal at the Port of Long Beach next door to us. So, as we compete for the carrier's business, the focus for Port of Los Angeles was to not only help our terminal operator and supply chain providers facilitate a successful ship call, but also to demonstrate our ability to be responsive to CMA CGM's needs on this historic occasion.

Communications Challenge/Opportunity

Given its business ties to the port next door, CMA CGM decided to let Port of Los Angeles handle the first ship call over the holiday weekend, and then return the ship in February for a formal christening event at the Port of Long Beach. While they did not object to our team publicizing the December 26 ship call, they specifically told us that we must work with their team to develop and approve any and all press opportunities, and CMA CGM did not wish to be quoted in the press release announcing plans for the call, nor interviewed by any media during the ship call. Our challenges included: 1) planning all the publicity-generating activities with a team of senior level company officials – mostly from France and the U.S. East Coast with whom we never worked; 2) developing materials, media activities and staffing plans weeks in advance (to accommodate peoples' holiday schedules and staff around unavailable team members); 3) generating media interest less than 12 hours after the Christmas Holiday; and creating meaningful media and VIP opportunities over the course of a post-holiday weekend while ensuring that ship operations would not be disrupted in any way whatsoever.

For Los Angeles leadership, this ship call was a BIG DEAL, and there were expectations of a special event, including strong interest from the mayor, city councilmember, congresswoman and a number of other high-ranking officials. Because CMA CGM wanted to postpone public access to the ship until its christening event at the Port of Long Beach in February, we studied a variety of event opportunities on the wharf, but ultimately decided that bringing any more than a small group of persons onto the active terminal would not be possible due to security concerns, visitor/media expectations for a ship tour, and a high level of labor and terminal management closely monitoring the discharge and loading of a vessel that was one-third larger than any ship they had ever serviced in the U.S. Our second challenge was simply garnering media attention over the holiday weekend when newsrooms would be running skeleton crews. We thought that if we were able to do this right, we could actually "own" the holiday weekend news coverage.

With CMA CGM's wishing to relinquish all PR to us, our publicity goal was simple: overshadow any media coverage surrounding future visits of the CMA CGM Benjamin Franklin. Our primary audience to reach over the "slow news" holiday weekend was the general public. We also wanted to reach

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industry influencers and policymakers, and create a trending topic on social media about the Benjamin Franklin at the Port of Los Angeles.

Nexus to the Port's Overall Mission

The Port of Los Angeles is America's Port, the nation's #1 container port and global model for sustainability, security, and social responsibility. Known for progressive environmental achievements and state-of-the-art technology, the Port's commitment to modernization and efficiency is at its core with plans to invest \$2.6 billion in infrastructure improvements over the next decade. Ultra large vessels represent cleaner, more efficient operations. The Benjamin Franklin personified the future of container shipping and solidified the Port's role as a catalyst in this movement.

Planning and Programming

Nearly a month of preparation went into planning the visit details and media coverage opportunities surrounding the historic megaship call, from early meetings with the shipping line's executives to day-of full-scale production that left no stone unturned. With one week to go before the arrival, our team leader was in charge of a schedule of activities and events that would take place during the ship's visit. This schedule was revised dozens of times over the course of event planning and execution.

We first saw a change in perspective from CMA CGM when their social media team reached out to us wanting to create a photo contest. The ship was not in a location that was publicly accessible, so we planned and started to promote a sunset shutterbug cruise after the holiday weekend, while the ship was still in port.

On the day of arrival, we met the ship at sea at approximately 4:30 a.m. with a photographer who started to capture the official photos of the visit. We also chartered a helicopter for the dawn hours to photograph the ship at berth and provide video footage to the news stations which was channeled through the local ABC network affiliate – the coordinates for the feed were shared in the media advisory.

Up to 48 hours of the ship's arrival, we planned to push the video and photos out on Saturday and then coordinate a media boat tour the following Monday when media was back from the holiday. However, on December 23, the mayor's office advised us the mayor wanted a press event on December 26, so we needed to propose some options. We adapted the Monday strategy and chartered a vessel to transport media and VIPs out to the foot of Benjamin Franklin on Saturday morning. From that spot, we held a press conference and official presentation of the first arrival plaque. This was a substantial last-minute change to the schedule, but we were able to accomplish it and it helped to garner additional press coverage. The CMA CGM executives were so pleased over the VIP ship tour arranged for the mayor and councilmember, when they boarded the harbor tour boat for the press event and presentation of the first arrival plaque, the senior vice president asked to make a few remarks for the audience – everything on record. This was a full reversal of the company's original posture of not wanting to comment during the first call and, in addition, on the day the vessel departed CMA CGM issued its own announcement from Marseille, France, heralding the successful call, and including a group photo of our executives and a recap of the visit from both an official and operational standpoint.

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One particularly nice touch during the press event was presenting the captain with a professionally framed photo of the CMA CGM Benjamin Franklin taken at the Port of Los Angeles just hours before the plaque ceremony. The visuals from the event and other GoPro footage we shot of the arrival made for a YouTube news story we posted to cap off our publicity efforts.

Actions Taken & Outputs

Planning the visit of the 18,000-TEU megaship involved constant coordination among representatives from the Port of Los Angeles, CMA CGM Shipping Line, APM Terminals, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, and elected officials. A series of tours were planned for elected officials, media, and social media audience to cover the visit. The Port of Los Angeles organized three media boat tours, an on-board press conference with the mayor of Los Angeles and CMA CGM executives, and supplied the CMA CGM communications team with the best photos and videos for unrestricted use.



Saturday, December 26

The official first arrival photo of the CMA CGM Benjamin Franklin, which accompanies most news articles.

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Saturday, December 26

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti officially welcomed the ship to L.A.



Saturday, December 26

The welcoming ceremony and press conference included remarks from CMA CGM SVP Marc Bourdon.

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Monday, December 28

Additional media and customers of CMA CGM, APM Terminals and the Port of Los Angeles.



Tuesday, December 29

Social media campaign and sunset tour offering never-seen-before views of the megaship against the backdrop of America's busiest port using the hashtag #BenjaminFranklinVisitsLA (mentions = 250).

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Photography Contest

In conjunction with CMA CGM, the Port of Los Angeles promoted a photography contest to win a chance to board the ship when it returned in February using the hashtag #CMACGMusa (mentions = 400).

Outcome and Evaluation

By all accounts, pulling off an event of this size and scale over Christmas weekend was a huge success.

First and foremost, the customer, CMA CGM was so pleased with the results, they even requested the Port of Los Angeles have involvement in the party the Port of Long Beach was planning for February. In turn, the Port of Los Angeles supplied a list of ideas and offered assistance to our neighboring port.

Secondly, the Port of Los Angeles achieved its goal of unrivaled media coverage in 573 news reports, most notable being the CBS Evening News, with an audience of 3.4 million. View a sampling of related clips on the [Port of Los Angeles website](#). Publicity value of these reports is estimated by Cision, a third-party media monitoring company, at nearly \$1.1 million (separate report has breakdown of value of each story).

Thirdly, social media analytics have indicated this visit ranked as one of the Port of Los Angeles' most engaging topics.

- **Twitter**
Benjamin Franklin-related Tweets earned more than 36,000 impressions over a seven-day period.
- **Facebook**
With a reach of more than 270,000 people, the arrival of the Benjamin Franklin has been our most [engaging post](#) to date. -The Port reached an additional 60,000 Facebook users with [this time lapse video](#).

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- ***Instagram***

We gained approximately 300 new followers (nearly 10% growth) in seven days as a result of the Benjamin Franklin social media tour.

- ***YouTube***

With nearly 53,000 views to date, the arrival of the Benjamin Franklin remains the Port's highest-viewed YouTube video. View an entire [playlist](#) dedicated to the Benjamin Franklin Visit to Los Angeles.