

# 2016 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

## INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

6157

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                      | _____   |

Please check the appropriate box:

CATEGORY 1

CATEGORY 2

CATEGORY 3

Entry Title Open channels: Quarterly employee newsletter  
Name of Port The Port of Virginia  
Port Address 600 World Trade Center, Norfolk, VA 23510  
Contact Name/Title Jay Stecher / Vice President, Marketing and Communications  
Telephone 757-683-2120 Email Address jstecher@portofvirginia.com

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.



VIRGINIA PORT AUTHORITY  
600 WORLD TRADE CENTER, NORFOLK, VA 23510  
(757) 683-8000

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

In the port's 40+ year history, it never had an internal newsletter. A new leadership team was installed in late 2014 and began tackling the issues that faced the port: congestion, lack of infrastructure investment, confidence in port performance, and organizational culture.

Under new leadership, the port developed a new mission, new values and a new brand identity to help provide clarity in the marketplace, and provide our colleagues (employees) with one flag under which they could rally.

We created our internal newsletter as a way to:

- further instill our core values
- Recognize colleagues for "living the values,"
- provide performance and safety metrics
- educate colleagues about aspects of the business with which they may be unfamiliar

**2. How does the communication used in this entry complement the organization's overall mission?**

The Port of Virginia's mission is as follows:

*Guided by our company values, The Port of Virginia will achieve our shared vision of operational excellence, fiscal responsibility, and sustainable growth. Above all, we will remain responsible members of the communities we serve, a valuable resource to our customers, an excellent place to work, and an economic engine for the region.*

Open Channels helps create positive work environment by properly explaining our values to new colleagues, as well as providing examples of how to "live the values." Additionally, it helps encourage operational excellence via our performance metrics section. Lastly, the volunteer council section helps demonstrate camaraderie and helps reinforce our positive work environment.

**3. What were the communications planning and programming components used for this entry?**

The goal of this piece was to provide a quarterly "touchpoint" for colleagues that aided in the furthering of our core values within our colleagues. We established an editorial calendar for the next 4 issues: setting content deadlines, establishing themes for each issue and reaching out to "guest columnists" from other areas of the port to contribute to the newsletter.

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

We established an editorial calendar for the next 4 issues: setting content deadlines, establishing themes for each issue and reaching out to "guest columnists" from other areas of the port to contribute to the newsletter.

We also established a dedicated email address ([openchannels@portofvirginia.com](mailto:openchannels@portofvirginia.com)) that we provided to colleagues to use when submitting fellow colleagues for our "living the values" section of the newsletter.

Many of our colleagues work at desks, but a large portion of our colleagues work "non-desk" jobs (e.g. crane maintenance, facilities maintenance, etc.), so we created a newsletter that could easily be read online, or printed out and placed in common areas where our maintenance colleagues could easily read the newsletter.

Our Director of Internal and Partner Communications acts as "editor in chief" for the newsletter and does much of the writing. Additionally, he regularly reaches out to other departments (e.g. Health & Safety, Process Excellence, etc.) for contributions to help educate our colleagues on important aspects of our business.

**5. What were the communications outcomes from this entry and what evaluation methods were used to assess them?**

In our first and second issues, we included a link to an anonymous five-question survey (<http://svy.mk/ISW5Hch>) that asked our colleagues:

- a. How important was the newsletter in their opinion in relation to colleague morale
- b. to rank the newsletter sections in order of importance
- c. to provide feedback on a regularly occurring section
- d. how they read the newsletter
- e. any other comments, questions, etc.

We learned through the survey that 96% of our colleagues view the newsletter on a computer. This allowed us to begin offering more rich content in the newsletter. For example, Our 3<sup>rd</sup> issue featured an embedded video in the safety section that automatically begins playing when it appears on the screen.

We also learned that the "living the values" was the most-read section of the newsletter. This fact was further emphasized by the growing number of submissions each issue. Issue three featured six colleagues.

Anecdotally, we regularly receive emails after we distribute the newsletter thanking us for providing this piece to our colleagues.