



PORTS OF INDIANA
3 PORTS - 2 WATERWAYS - 1 SYSTEM

2017 AAPA Communication Awards

Periodicals: Portside Magazine

Summary:

Portside is the biannual magazine of the Ports of Indiana. Each issue highlights one of our three ports, showcase special occasions, such as celebrating Indiana's bicentennial, or feature the organization as a whole. Issues specific to a port serve as that port's annual brochure, making Portside a critical marketing and communications tool.

Portside brings Indiana's ports to life with full-color photos and stories that take you beyond the basics of most marketing materials, and infuses a personal perspective on what is happening at Indiana's ports. Each edition helps in the promotion of the state's ports and port companies. Current customers, logistics and manufacturing companies, government officials, port communities, and economic development partners utilize Portside to stay up-to-date and connected with port operations. When distributed to a potential client, Portside can serve as a professional representation of what advantages Ports of Indiana can offer a company, potentially being an influential piece in their decision to locate at one of our Ports. Additionally, while this publication allows us to share marketing campaigns or articles of interest, it has also become the voice of our organization and our leadership.

1. Communications Challenge and Opportunities

The Ports of Indiana is a unique port system. We are a statewide port authority with three public ports – one on Lake Michigan and two on the Ohio River – as far as a six-hour drive apart. Our corporate headquarters is located in downtown Indianapolis (at least two hours from water in all directions), which makes it impossible for anyone to physically stand on a dock and see all of our port operations. As a matter of fact,



although over 50 percent of the state’s border is water, most of Indiana’s businesses and population are not located near water and many do not think of Indiana as a waterborne shipping state.

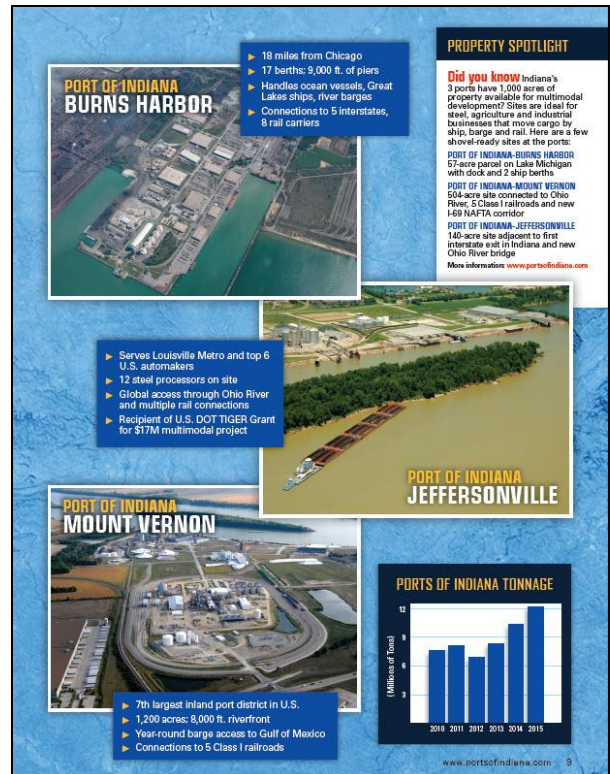
Portside grew out of a need for a flexible publication that could highlight each port and share the latest news. As the saying goes, “a picture is worth a thousand words,” and the full-color, glossy Portside provides us with an opportunity to introduce businesses and the general public to Indiana’s three ports and gives them a chance to learn about port activities without having to travel to one of the ports. Each issue is focused on one port, providing an annual brochure to market that facility, with one edition covering the organization as whole or showcasing special occasions. The magazine highlights important events, new developments and special features about each of Indiana’s three ports as well as economic development opportunities in and around our ports.

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 Ports of Indiana is challenged with maintaining market visibility. Portside Magazine provides the Ports of Indiana and its three ports a platform to promote the ports and port companies to stakeholders and partners as well as the general public, regardless of their physical location within the state. The Ports of Indiana has a unique opportunity to branch into new industries and create deeper relationships with port companies while enhancing its image. Portside offers our organization an opportunity to market our facilities and services, showcase our team of experts and educate the general public on the value and capabilities Indiana’s ports possess.



The importance of communication with state, regional, and local stakeholders as well as marketing for the attraction of new business is evident and essential to building awareness of the organization and all it offers. Portside Magazine positions the Ports of Indiana as a resourceful business partner with a network of services, facilities and relationships that creates opportunities for those involved in trade and business development to access the international marketplace.

3. Planning and Programming Components

Goals: The goal of Portside is to serve as a marketing and educational tool for our three ports and our port companies. It conveys key messages to readers that Indiana's ports are a great success story, vital to Indiana's economy and they provide significant business opportunities for private industries. As a marketing piece, Portside acts as an annual brochure for each port. Each issue focuses on a particular port, which gives the featured port the opportunity to use the publication as a primary marketing piece for the year by not only showcasing the best aspects of the port, but also displaying available industrial sites, descriptions of top port companies, and key competitive advantages and cargo services.

Objectives: The objective of this periodical is to present the Ports of Indiana's messages to our target audience through the pages of a professional publication, while also reducing the need to produce annual marketing brochures for each port. Each issue of Portside shares stories on a variety of topics or issues, including port company profiles highlighting the broad range of port businesses that are located at the ports, which also gives Ports of Indiana another channel to connect with port companies. Key industry sectors that are important to our ports and are featured in Portside include agriculture, steel, coal, project cargo, as well as lake and river shipping and state logistics advantages.

Target Audiences: The primary audiences for our magazine include: current port companies and customers, prospective customers looking to locate at or use our ports; logistics and manufacturing companies throughout the region; local, state and national government officials; and our three port communities' leadership and economic development partners.

A secondary audience focus includes the general public, including those without any previous contact or knowledge of the Ports of Indiana.

4. Actions and Communication Outputs

Strategies: Our strategy for Portside is to promote the various facets of the Ports of Indiana: the three ports, port companies, port communities and real estate opportunities. The quarterly publication focuses one edition on each of our three ports, with one overview or special edition issue. The Ports of Indiana uses this publication not only as a magazine highlighting the organization, but each of the port-specific issues serves 'double-duty' as an annual brochure for each port.

Tactics: Tactics for developing Portside start with early content discussions, including the question 'What is the primary element/issue/feature of the port we need to market in the

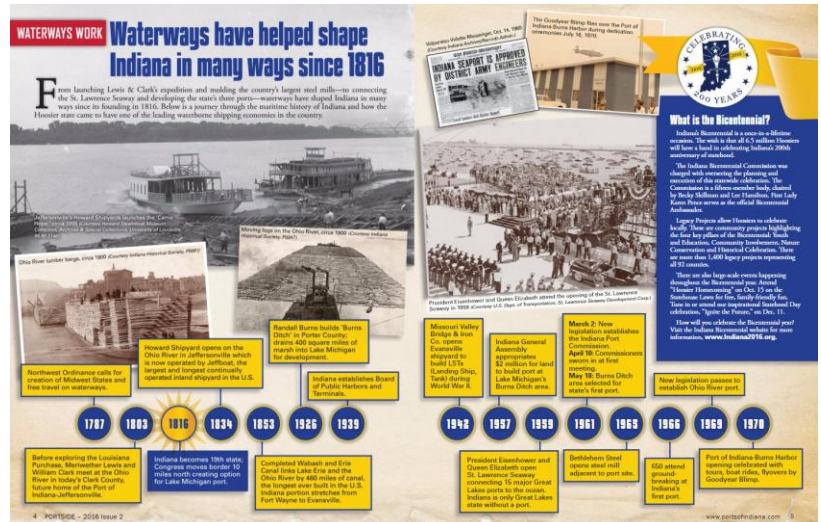
upcoming year?’ We write stories in a way that brings new information to subscribers, but is relevant to those encountering the publication as a brochure. Each issue highlights port companies, acreage available for development, port communities and more. For each issue we include one or two ‘feature’ stories focusing on the most important marketing messages of the day, which allows some flexibility to promote key issues with multiple photos, expansive layouts and additional details not available through other marketing materials.

Implementation Plan: Portside Magazine is produced by a combination of in-house staff and an outside graphic designer. The cost to design, print and mail each issue is roughly \$5,500 and includes a print run of about 4,000 per edition. The publication is complimentary and is mailed to approximately 2,500 subscribers, including business and government leaders, economic development groups, logistics and manufacturing companies and Ports of Indiana stakeholders throughout North America. Copies are included in Ports of Indiana business development materials and distributed at each of the organization’s four office locations. The magazine is also distributed at special events, tradeshows and during marketing presentations. In addition to the print version, a version is made available online at www.portsofindiana.com. Readers can subscribe to the printed and/or online version of Portside.

5. Evaluations Methods and Communications Outcomes

We gauge the success of this publication by conducting surveys, measuring savings in marketing expenses and tracking the metrics of our online version. By monitoring results, we are able to collect indicators that have helped us adapt and improve the publication to better meet our needs and reader interests.

In a 2017 survey, including key Ports of Indiana partners, Portside readers said they appreciated the features on investment activities and development. When asked to rate the publication’s quality, all commentators rated it a four or five on a scale of one to five, with five being “High” quality.



Comments from participants include:

- “I find the features on investment activities and development useful.”
- “I personally found the Bicentennials issue useful. The history of the canals and waterways over 200 years was informative.”
- “I enjoy learning about the expansion of services.”

The decision to focus on one port per issue to serve as the major marketing piece was based on previous survey responses asking for more in-depth information about development opportunities at our ports and our Port Directors' need for updated marketing materials. Making this change to Portside has saved significant time and resources in developing additional marketing pieces, as well as approximately \$15,000 per year in marketing brochure development and printing costs, and it also provides key marketing messages to subscribers who would not normally receive brochures from certain ports. This dual role is extremely beneficial for our small communications staff with limited resources, and it allows key marketing messages to be revisited, updated and customized more often as part of Portside development, rather than requiring separate projects and resources.

Our online version of Portside has a subscription list of 1,600 recipients. Email notifications are delivered with a link to access the online magazine. Based on our tracking metrics the three issues included in this submission were opened 1,229 times combined (approximately 410 times per issue) with 206 click-throughs to additional information. The online version is hosted by the website Issuu.com and can be accessed via links by both the Ports of Indiana website as well as the direct emails. These editions were read a total of 852 times, with the total amount of time spent reading these three issues being nearly 71 hours.