



2017 AAPA EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS

*Classification: Social/Web-Based Media*

## **Pop-Up Harbor Tours**



# Pop-Up Harbor Tours

## Summary:

For many years, a favorite Community Relations outreach tool for the Port of Long Beach has been the Harbor Tour program that welcomes aboard about 2,500 passengers each year for behind-the-scenes, up-close, waterside tours. Each tour is narrated by a Port staff member, frequently a member of the Communications and Community Relations team. The program is so popular, the Port has instituted a lottery system to make the process more equitable for those interested in getting a ticket.

The Pop-Up Harbor Tour program is a social media-driven tool to increase engagement on the Port's social media channels as well as add additional tour participants. It encourages social media engagement and rewards the Port's biggest fans with the chance to be aboard for a special harbor tour just for them.

The idea was based on pop-up restaurant or pop-up clothing shop "secret" offers for people "in the know" who closely follow a brand's social media activity. Fans could only receive an invitation to be aboard for a Pop-Up Harbor Tour by following special instructions posted on the Port's Instagram page. Facebook and Twitter were used to "push" fans on those platforms to like and engage on the Port's Instagram page. Four themed Pop-Up Harbor Tours, scheduled quarterly, were scheduled welcoming 480 passengers.



# SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH Pop-Up Harbor Tours

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN Pop-Up Tour

Port of Long Beach  
Published by MaryKate Cornell [?] · February 15, 2016 ·

Visit our Instagram page to learn how to snag a spot on our first Pop-Up Harbor Tour! [www.instagram.com/portoflongbeach](http://www.instagram.com/portoflongbeach)

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN POP-UP HARBOR TOUR**  
FEBRUARY 19, 5-6:30P.M.

918 people reached Boost Post

Like Comment Share Hootlet

Alan Obando, Lily Love and 19 others Top Comments

portoflongbeach  
Port of Long Beach

96 likes 58w

portoflongbeach POP-UP TOUR IS FULL. THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO REGISTERED! There are still spaces available on our first FREE POP-UP HARBOR TOUR! Reserve your spot today and get an up-close view of @CMCGCM's 18,000 TEU ship the BENJAMIN FRANKLIN on Fri., Feb. 19 from 5-6:30 p.m. from downtown Long Beach. Want to join? Here is how to snag a spot for you and up to one guest:  
1. Follow @portoflongbeach on Instagram

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN POP-UP HARBOR TOUR**  
FEBRUARY 19, 5-6:30P.M.

Add a comment...

portoflongbeach  
Port of Long Beach

89 likes 58w

hosting its first POP-UP harbor tour to celebrate the christening of the BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. Get an exclusive up-close and personal view of @cmccgm's new mega-ship on Fri., Feb. 19 from 5-6:30 p.m. from downtown Long Beach. Want to join? Here is how to snag a spot for you and up to one guest:  
1. Follow @portoflongbeach on Instagram  
2. Email [socialmedia@polb.com](mailto:socialmedia@polb.com) with your full name and Instagram username  
3. Confirm your spot once you receive an email from the Port. \*Space is limited to

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN POP-UP HARBOR TOUR**  
FEBRUARY 19, 5-6:30P.M.

Add a comment...

## URBAN OCEAN Pop-Up Tour

portoflongbeach  
Port of Long Beach

122 likes 48w

portoflongbeach Pop-up Tour spaces are still available! Not only is Long Beach home to one of the busiest ports in the nation, but also to a premier aquarium that attracts thousands of visitors every year. Learn all about how the nation's second busiest port operates in a sustainable way and the considerations that are in play in an urban ocean waterfront from @PortOfLongBeach and @AquariumPacific representatives on Saturday, April 30 at 10:30 a.m. from downtown Long Beach. Want to join? Here is how to snag a spot for you and up to one guest:  
1. Follow @portoflongbeach and @aquariumpacific on Instagram  
2. Email [socialmedia@polb.com](mailto:socialmedia@polb.com) with your full name and Instagram username  
3. Confirm your spot once you receive an email from the Port. \*Space is limited!

**URBAN OCEAN POP-UP HARBOR TOUR**  
APRIL 30, 10:30AM - 12PM

Add a comment...

Port of Long Beach  
Published by MaryKate Cornell [?] · April 20, 2016 ·

Not only is Long Beach home to one of the busiest ports in the nation, but also to a premier aquarium that attracts thousands of visitors every year. Learn all about how the nation's second busiest port operates in a sustainable way and the considerations that are in play in an urban ocean waterfront from Port of Long Beach and the Aquarium of the Pacific representatives on Saturday, April 30 at 10:30 a.m. from downtown Long Beach. Check out our Instagram page for a chance to snag a spot on our next Pop-Up Harbor Tour! <http://bit.ly/1SvYxzv>

**URBAN OCEAN POP-UP HARBOR TOUR**  
APRIL 30, 10:30AM - 12PM

1,751 people reached Boost Post

Like Comment Share Hootlet

Fred Meseguer, Ivan Acosta and 18 others Top Comments

3 shares

## VALENTINE'S Pop-Up Tour

Port of Long Beach  
Published by MaryKate Cornell [?] · January 26 ·

POP-UP HARBOR TOUR! Love is in the air at the Port of Long Beach. Bring your sweetie and cruise through the Port under the romantic twinkling lights of gantry cranes while you learn about the second busiest port in the nation. This free tour will take place on February 14th from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. in Downtown Long Beach. Space is limited, want to join? Check out our Instagram page for directions to register. [www.instagram.com/portoflongbeach](http://www.instagram.com/portoflongbeach)

**POP-UP HARBOR TOUR**

2,222 people reached Boost Post

Like Comment Share Hootlet

Mary Jane Mazzella, Bridget DuKet and 53 others Top Comments

12 shares

portoflongbeach  
Port of Long Beach

332 likes 8w

portoflongbeach YOU'RE INVITED TO A FREE POP-UP HARBOR TOUR! Love is in the air at the Port of Long Beach. Bring your sweetie and cruise through the Port under the romantic twinkling lights of gantry cranes while you learn about the second busiest port in the nation. This free tour will take place on February 14th from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. in Downtown Long Beach. ♥️👉 Space is limited, want to join? Here is how to snag a spot for you

**POP-UP HARBOR TOUR**

Add a comment...

# 7 Communication Challenges and Opportunities

The Port of Long Beach is the premier U.S. gateway for trans-Pacific trade, the nation's second-busiest container seaport and a trailblazer in innovative goods movement, safety and environmental stewardship. With annual trade valued at \$180 billion, and nearly 7 million container units crossing the docks in 2016, the Port supports more than a million U.S. jobs. Long Beach is "big ship ready," welcoming the Pacific fleet's largest vessels and serving 175 shipping lines with connections to 217 international seaports. The Port is pursuing the most aggressive capital improvements program in the nation and creating the world's most modern, efficient and sustainable seaport.

The two largest projects are the spectacular cable-stayed bridge being constructed to replace the aging Gerald Desmond Bridge (\$1.5 billion), and the Middle Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Project (\$1.3 billion), the most technologically advanced container terminal in North America.

The massive Port of Long Beach, encompassing 3,200 acres with 31 miles of waterfront, is just over a

bridge from the city of Long Beach, but may seem a million miles away from people's everyday lives.

For a number of years, free community harbor tours during the summer months, offering waterside views of the Port, have been a great way to build community pride and positive awareness for the Port. Every summer, tours are eagerly anticipated and fill up rapidly, serving a total of 2,500 guests each year.

To add capacity and attract a new, younger, social media-savvy demographic, during 2016, the Port of Long Beach Communications and Community Relations team introduced a series of social media-driven Pop-Up Harbor Tours that proved to be very popular.

The Port of Long Beach has a strong social media following and the harbor tours are immensely popular, so the Communications team found a way to combine the two.



The Port of Long Beach

## 2 Complementing the Overall Mission

To complete its primary goal to provide open channels of communications between the Port and its various constituencies, the Port of Long Beach Communications and Community Relations Division implements a comprehensive annual campaign to reach all of its critical target markets. This campaign includes advertising in traditional web-based media, publicity campaigns, active social media presence, plus extensive community and industry outreach

including education programs, and sponsorship of community events and activities. Most anticipated are the Summer Harbor Tours, with passenger slots filling within hours of being announced. The new Pop-Up Harbor Tours allow the Port to expand its reach and tell its story to a younger, community oriented, social media-savvy audience.

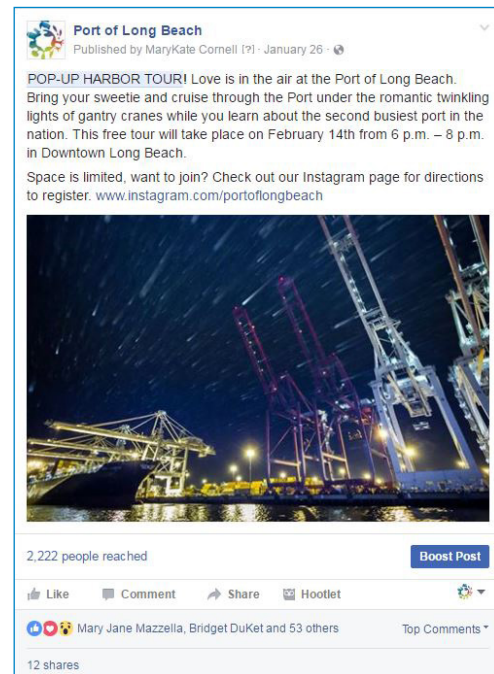


### 3 Planning and Programming Components

The overall goal of the pilot for the Pop-Up Harbor Tour Program was to expand the Port's outreach to the community using social media to attract and engage with a new audience.

The target audiences for the Pop-Up Harbor Tour program are:

- The Long Beach community;
- Port of Long Beach social media fans;
- Port of Long Beach fans.
- The objectives set for reaching the Pop-Up Harbor Tour goals were to:
  - Develop four, themed Pop-Up Harbor Tours, one each quarter, adding a total capacity to the Harbor Tour Program of 480 more people;
  - Achieve 75 percent attendance for each tour;
  - Market the Pop-Up program exclusively through social media;
  - Create images and crisp copy specifically suitable for social media posts;
  - Reward our "fans" and "followers" with exclusive tours just for them;



- Engage our social media "super users" in real life, creating brand advocates;
- Expand Port exposure through online posts by Pop-Up passengers;
- Maintain contact with users;
- As much as possible, track the success of the program.

### 4 Actions Taken and Communication Outputs Used

The Port has a strong social media following, and the harbor tours are immensely popular. The Port wanted to find a way to combine the two. A social media platform was selected as the sole communications strategy for the Pop-Up Harbor Tour program as a way to boost and build engagement with the Port's fans, grow Port platforms, and allow fans to see what they view on our channels in real life. Fans are encouraged to interpret and post their real-life experience during and after the tour. This translates to a large group of people advocating positively for the Port of Long Beach on their own pages – Port messaging is being disseminated by the Port's own fans! With the Harbor Tour structure already in place, it was a simple matter for Port to change the sign-up structure to be more social media-focused.

Port staffing included the social media manager to create social media posts, a community relations specialist to create an Eventbrite event and manage registration plus, two additional staff members and one intern to staff the actual tour. The Port has a contractual agreement with Harbor Breeze, a charter company that provides the vessels for both the traditional harbor



tours and the new Pop-Up tours. All tours run approximately 90 minutes.

During the actual boat tour, Port staff communicates face-to-face to educate passengers about the Port on a deeper level than what they could learn just from following us on social media. The in-person communication is extremely important to help build our brand as a positive and friendly government agency that is receptive, transparent and educational. Also, besides the tour narration, each passenger receives a standard Port of Long Beach Harbor Tour brochure including a numbered tour map of the harbor and other Port

facts. While aboard, passengers were reminded to engage with the Port on social media and share posts with their friends. Also during the Tour, Port staff monitored social media to engage live with the fans who were aboard.

Throughout the entire Pop-Up Tour process, customer service was key. Registering for something through social media can be scary or foreign to people who are new users or not social media-minded.

Being friendly and understanding in email or over-the-phone communication was also very important. A few guests who didn't use social media but had heard about the

tour from friends or family also wanted to join the tours. In order to be open and transparent, they were invited along. While social media growth and engagement were the specific goals, the overall mission as a department of the City of Long Beach is to educate and build awareness about the Port to anyone who is interested.

Clear and concise copy was developed so people would understand how to register/join the Pop-Up Harbor Tour, and additional language, such as "space is limited," was added to temper expectations and create exclusivity buzz, as with the Instagram copy:



### Instagram Copy

YOU'RE INVITED TO A POP-UP HARBOR TOUR with @CGM! #POLB is hosting its first POP-UP harbor tour to celebrate the christening of the BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. Get an exclusive up-close and personal view of CMA CGM's new mega-ship on Fri., Feb. 19 from 5-6:30 p.m. from downtown Long Beach.

Want to join? Here is how to snag a spot for you:

1. Follow @portoflongbeach on Instagram
2. Email socialmedia@polb.com with your full name and Instagram name
3. Confirm your spot once you receive an email from the Port

\*Space is limited to the first 100 individuals who confirm their spot!

These themes made the Pop-Up Harbor Tours feel more "special" than a typical harbor tour:

1. Arrival of the "Benjamin Franklin" – largest ship to ever call at the Port
2. Urban Ocean, partnering with the Aquarium of the Pacific
3. Valentine's Day

## 5 Communications Outcomes and Evaluation Methods

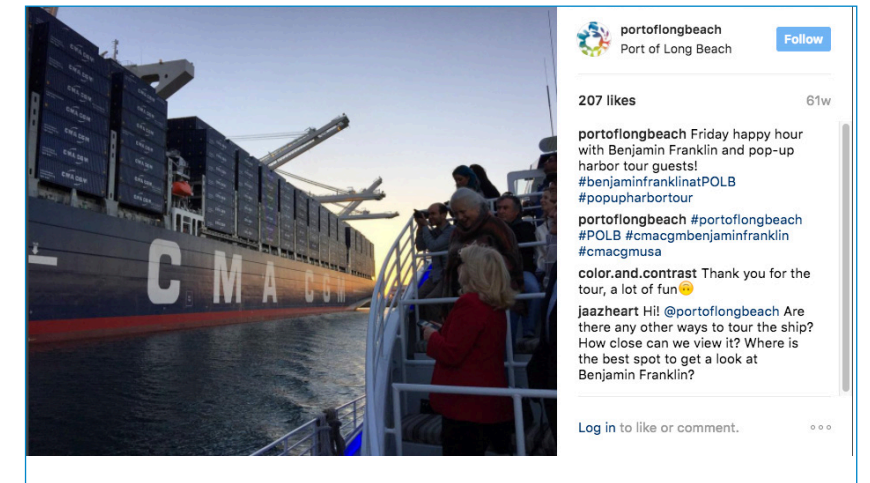
### Following is the project sequence:

1. Brainstorm tour themes to set them apart from traditional harbor tours.
2. Created a short social media plan detailing each post on each social channel: main post on Instagram, subsequent posts on FB and Twitter to push people to Instagram.
3. Create clear and concise copy to post detailing the rules to enter/register for the tour.
4. Create graphics in-house and choose images for posts from the Port archive.
5. Set up Eventbrite event to manage registrations and check-in.
6. Two weeks before the event, post image and copy to Instagram announcing tour.
7. Collect emails from interested fans, compile into list, then, using Eventbrite, send out invitations.
8. If space is still available one week before tour, post follow-up Instagram post inviting others to register; repeat email collection process.
9. Day of tour, check in passengers for the tour using the Eventbrite app.
10. During introductions and announcements before tour narration begins, encourage guests to engage with the port on social media using our hashtag and handles (#portoflongbeach, #POLB, @portoflongbeach). Remind passengers that the Port will share favorites on its own social media channels.
11. Post-tour, 'like' or comment on fans' Instagram posts who were on the tour to show appreciation for their posts during the event.
12. Encourage passengers to complete a Harbor Tour survey.

The Port team successfully planned and implemented four themed Pop-Up Harbor Tours and exceeded the objective of 75 percent attendance for each tour, reaching full capacity of 480 people.

The posts created were effective in promoting and filling the tours, and passengers felt that their Pop-Up Tour was a special event, just for them.

An average of six photos were posted by participants to Instagram during each tour using the hashtag #portoflongbeach, #POLB or tagging @portoflongbeach. Following the Valentine's Day-themed Pop-up Harbor Tour, the Port posted a photo on its Instagram page taken during the tour, and these are some of the positive comments left under the photo by participants:



**Corkyledog:** Had a great time, Thank you very much.

**Timmmmartin:** Had an awesome time, thanks again!

**Socalbrian:** We loved it!

**Janetteramirezgarcia:** Loved it! ☺  
Come back boat!!

**Staceysturgis:** thank you we had a great time.

**Dre\_solo\_** Thank you so much!



An overall Harbor Tour Survey for 2016 showed the following results:

- Of the 176 passengers who completed the survey, 56 percent were Long Beach residents.
- The majority of the remaining respondents were from other Southern California cities.
- The ages of respondents varied widely with only 1.7 percent under age 25, showing room for growth in this age group
- When asked what social media platforms respondents use to follow the Port, a majority of 60 percent said none, followed by Facebook with 25 percent, Instagram with 13 percent and Twitter with nearly 3 percent.
- 25 percent of respondents heard about the Harbor Tours from the Port's **re:port** newsletter that is mailed to all Long Beach residences. Another 25 percent cited friends or family members; 16 percent Port website and only 8 percent mentioned social media, specifically Facebook.
- 58 percent were on a Harbor Tour for the first time, and the remainder had been aboard 2 to 5 or more times.
- When asked how much they knew about the Port prior to the tour, 20 percent said "a lot," and nearly 52 percent said "a little." The remaining 28 percent knew "not much" or "nothing."

Following the Harbor Tour, 87 percent said they learned "a lot," and 12 percent learned "a little."

The information the respondents found most interesting were Port Operations, which was the clear favorite, followed by Economic Impact, Environmental Programs, Goods Movement, and Infrastructure which were all of equal interest.

- 98 percent said their general opinion of the Port of Long Beach was either "excellent" or "very good."
- 97 percent rated the narrator as either "excellent" or "very good."
- 99 percent rated the overall Harbor Tour experience as either "excellent" (83 percent) or "very good" (16 percent)

## Comments

- This was so great. Boat very comfortable and tour guides and helper terrific. Wonderful experience. Thank you!!!
- Thank you so much for the informative tour. The narrators were very quick to answer the questions and very nice.
- It's darn near perfect!
- Wish there were more so it was easier to sign up. Great event!
- I took my office to the port tour. We are a wine importer and ship many containers through LA-Long Beach on a weekly basis. Visiting the Port was a fantastic experience! (one negative comment was that our narrator was chewing gum during her narration which wasn't a great touch). Thank you for putting this tour together! A true must do.
- Other than having a whale pop up, I couldn't ask for much more. The crane operator waving the container grab arms (whatever



they are called) was very nice – they remind me of T-Rex arms.

- I have lived in Long Beach for 25 years. Thank you for enriching my knowledge of my city :)
- Thanks for inviting us on the pop-up tour – we LOVED it!
- Please continue the Harbor Tours and notify us of future significant events such as the Megaship Ben Franklin. Thank you so much for the tour it was great!



## Recap

### Quick Facts:

During 2016, the Port of Long Beach added four Pop-Up Harbor Tours, scheduled quarterly, to the regular summer schedule, increasing the 2,500 capacity by 480 passengers. The Port targeted 75 percent capacity on each of the Pop-Up tours, but passed that goal, reaching 100 percent.

The tours were promoted exclusively on social media for Port “fans” who had the inside track for these exclusive tours.

Tour themes included the arrival of the megaship Benjamin Franklin, a look at the urban ocean in partnership with the Aquarium of the Pacific, and a romantic Valentine’s Day theme.

Based on the success of the 2016 season, more Pop-Up Harbor Tours are planned for 2017.

Follow the Port of Long Beach:

