



WASHINGTON'S WORKING PORT

AAPA 2017 COMMUNICATION AWARDS

CATEGORY: SPECIAL EVENT

INTRODUCTION

In 1999, the City of Longview established an official sister city relationship between Longview, the largest city in the port district, and Wako, Japan. Initially, the partnership focused on local government operations and education.

In the summer of 2016, the Port of Longview sought to introduce the economic development aspect into the relationship by participating in the Wako delegates visit to Longview. The Port's permanent inclusion in the relationship would be determined by Wako's interest, following their interaction with the Port on this visit to Longview.

To demonstrate the Port's strong desire to participate, it organized opportunities for the delegation to visit the Port and its tenants, and hosted a welcome reception with economic development partners.

Overall, the delegation was thoroughly impressed with the Port's participation in the event. After the delegation returned home to Wako, the Port was invited to be an official part of the Sister City partnership and invited to travel to Wako this fall to meet with economic development and business leaders from their region.

1. WHAT ARE/WERE THE ENTRY'S SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES OR OPPORTUNITIES?

The Port of Longview sought to participate in the City of Longview's Sister City relationship and introduce an economic development aspect to a relationship that strictly focused on local government and education. Alternating annual visits between Longview, Washington, and Wako, Japan, the 2016 event in Longview was the perfect opportunity to demonstrate the strong trade ties between the countries and regions.

Opportunities

1. Establish an official relationship with one of the Port's top trading partners
2. Educate the Wako delegation on the economic development benefits it provides to the local community
3. Expand the existing program to include other community partners and elements
4. Develop a partnership with Wako, Japan, for future business opportunities

With any new project, we were able to identify a few challenges that we anticipated we would face throughout the planning process, as well as during then event:

1. Convincing the City of Longview to allow economic development into the program
2. Coordinating with the different groups and entities involved with the Sister Cities event
3. Creating a concrete schedule for the tour and reception for the delegation
4. Identifying and booking a local venue that had the capacity for up to 100 guests, which would also cater the event.

5. Partnering with other local businesses that focus on local economic development to cover different aspects of the reception (food, alcohol, etc.)

2. HOW DOES THE COMMUNICATION USED IN THE ENTRY COMPLEMENT THE ORGANIZATION'S OVERALL MISSION?

The Port of Longview works to excel in international trade for the economic benefit of the local community, which directly relates to establishing an economic development connection between Longview and Wako, Japan.

Strong international connections have the potential to lead to new business opportunities, cargo handling inquiries and partnerships between countries. By opening a door to Wako, the Port of Longview opens doors to major industries in that region of Japan – which is a region of major growth within Japan, the Port's second largest trading partner.

3. WHAT WERE THE COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMPONENTS USED FOR THIS ENTRY?

The primary goal of the Port's participation in the Sister City visit was to introduce a business development and economic development aspect to the event. Up to this point, the event has been focused on government relations and education.

Adding a business development and economic development aspect to the events allows for Longview to grow and develop new relationships in the Delegation from Wako, Japan. It was our mission to bring together the Wako Delegation, government officials and stakeholders from Kelso and Longview and facilitate a conversation regarding economic development opportunities in the area.

In order to reach our goal, we established key objectives that we needed to implement to be successful.

Goal: Establish economic development as a permanent aspect of the City of Longview's Sister City Program with Wako, Japan.

Objective 1: Demonstrate Port of Longview's innovation and leadership in economic development.

Strategy: Provide delegation a tour of Port facilities and key customer facilities

Tactic A: Work with log export yard and export grain terminal to provide facility tours, as logs and grain are a key commodity traded with Japan. Establish agenda and tour route.

Tactic B: Reserve a bus to give tours to the delegation and create an outline of the tours main points of emphasis and route

Objective 2: Identify existing trade and business connections between Port of Longview and the region of Wako, Japan.

Strategy: Research cargos traded between countries, port's cargo moves through and uses for the cargo to demonstrate that items the delegation uses daily already come through the Port of Longview.

Tactic A: Work with customers and their contacts in Japan to identify uses

Tactic B: Identify specific ports and companies in Wako receiving cargo

Tactic C: Build presentation and develop talking points to present findings

Objective 3: Expose delegation to Port customers and local economic development leaders to reinforce the economic development message.

Strategy: Host a welcoming reception of economic development partners

Tactic A: Generate a guest list that would best encompass major stakeholders and officials invested in economic development, i.e. economic development council, city officials, county officials, customers

Tactic B: Reserve space and set menu

Tactic C: Design and distribute special event invitation

Tactic D: Develop power point reinforcing key economic development messages

Tactic E: Get gift to present to delegation

Tactic F: Develop reception agenda and talking points for speakers

Tactic G: Seek event sponsorship from key partners

Primary audience: Wako, Japan, delegation

Secondary audience: Port customers, local government officials, Port staff, and media.

4. WHAT ACTIONS WERE TAKEN AND WHAT COMMUNICATION OUTPUTS WERE EMPLOYED IN THIS ENTRY?

Strategies and tactics – See previous question

Timeline

The timeline of the event was relatively short. We had three weeks to develop, implement and execute our participation in the Wako delegation visit.

In week one of the project, we solidified our timeline and plan for the upcoming event. Our plan included a budget of \$5,000 for reserving a location for the reception, gifts for our guests, and the food that would be catered. Our guest list was created and invitations that were created specifically for this event were distributed.

In week two, a venue was agreed upon and discussion regarding menu options began. At this point, we reached out to potential sponsors to partner with us for the event. At the same time, Port tenants were met with and established tour routes and times were established.

In week three of the planning process, the itinerary for the tour and reception were finalized and distributed to those involved, tour guides were briefed on expectations and time allotments, and a presentation was created to be shown throughout the dinner reception.

Our External Affairs Department, consisting of three individuals, handled the entire planning and implementation process. Our Communications Coordinator designed the invitations, purchased gifts to be given to the Wako Delegation, led the tour of the Port and two tenant properties, assisted in the setup of the reception, and took pictures during the event.

The Communications Associate handled the venue and menu reservations, coordinating with the City of Longview representatives on a timeline for tours and the reception, coordinated with Port tenants on tour times and locations, created the guest list, and managed the budget for the event and setup the venue for the reception.

The Director of External Affairs oversaw and approved all purchases and decisions regarding the event, researched and established trade connections between Longview and Wako and developed an official resolution for the Port of Longview Board of Commissioners to present to the Wako delegation identifying the Port's commitment to including economic development in the sister city partnership.

5. WHAT WERE THE COMMUNICATIONS OUTCOMES FROM THIS ENTRY AND WHAT EVALUATION METHODS WERE USED TO ASSESS THEM?

Shortly after the delegation returned home to Wako, the Port received a letter from the Director of the City of Wako thanking Longview for its hospitality and inviting representatives to visit the City of Wako.

In the letter, it is noted that the Mayor of Wako would gladly open doors and make introductions to the Honda Motor Corporation Plus, as well as any other Japanese companies based in Tokyo, to foster the economic development relationship between Longview and Wako.

By introducing the Wako delegation to the Port of Longview and discussing economic and development, we now have the opportunity to visit Wako, Japan, and discuss business opportunities with potential new customers. Thus, the Port successfully fulfilled its goal of establishing business connections and a long term, official economic relationship between the parties.

SPECIAL EVENT - SISTER CITIES ELECTRONIC INVITATION

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN

Evening Reception

SPOTLIGHTING THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
TIES BETWEEN OUR
SISTER-CITIES,

Longview & Wako, Japan

10.28.16

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Heavy Hors d'oeuvres
at The Bistro
1329 Commerce Ave

