



## PORT OF STOCKTON - VESSEL LOG

AAPA 2017 Communications Awards Program, Classification 5 – Community/Educational Outreach

The Port of Stockton has begun to publish a public-friendly version of its vessel log in the city of Stockton's #1 Sunday newspaper. In the weekly ad space the Port has purchased in *The Record*, vessels that are currently in port or are due in port soon are listed along with their origin/destination country and the commodity they are shipping. In addition, quick factoids about the Port are shared alongside a ship photo. These vessel logs are also posted to the Port's Facebook page. No matter where the log is viewed, it gives an idea of what kind of business from which region of the world is currently keeping the Port busy and successful.

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

Since the city of Stockton passed the Deep Water Bond of 1932, effectively bringing the Port of Stockton (Port) into existence, the city and the greater San Joaquin County region have shared a close relationship with the Port. In many ways, the Port has grown up with the region, over time becoming the key nexus point between California's world-renowned Central Valley agricultural engine and dozens of trade partners around the globe. Without effective and ongoing community outreach, education and engagement, the Port may over time seem like an anonymous, indifferent, and sometimes inconvenient industrial neighbor. The challenge was to regularly provide a glimpse of day-to-day operations to the public, so they can feel involved and take pride in what the Port does.

The creation of a daily vessel log is a regular part of the business of running a port. One challenge was to translate this useful yet not exactly eye-catching document into something a lay person would want to peruse. Another point to be addressed was deciding the best way to disseminate this information. The vessel log has been posted to the Port's website, [portofstockton.com](http://portofstockton.com), daily for years, but the Port is aiming for a wider audience in an effort to continue their ongoing community outreach and education initiative.

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

Our overall mission is to provide excellent service to our current business partners and attract new business, all while being a positive force for the local Stockton community and an exemplary steward of the environment at large. Many Stockton residents may occasionally notice large ships docked at the Port but may not be aware that the Port trades with more than 55 countries worldwide, for example. The vessel log newspaper ad is an effort to bring the local community closer to the Port and its activities.



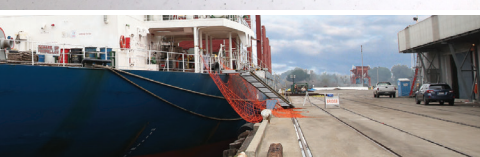
**Port of Stockton**  
CALIFORNIA  
**VESSEL LOG**

ARRIVALS / DEPARTURES

VESSELS

03/25/17 – 03/27/17	TRF Kristiar
03/27/17 – 03/30/17	Champion T
03/28/17 – 04/01/17	Luchov
04/01/17 – 04/05/17	African Bu
04/03/17 – 04/07/17	Global Gar
04/07/17 – 04/09/17	Tate J
04/08/17 – 04/09/17	Rising Si
04/15/17 – 04/18/17	Lone St:
04/22/17 – 04/23/17	Clipper S
04/26/17 – 04/29/17	Mount Seyr

Board of Commissioners - Chair Eli  
Commissioners Sylvester Aguilar, R. Jay A  
Port Di



ORIGIN / DESTINATION

Kuwait
China
New Caledonia
Korea
Trinidad
Japan
Costa Rica
Belgium
Norway
-

**Baby Owlets  
are hatching  
at the Port!  
Watch them  
grow on our  
website!**



www.portofstockton.com

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

With the vessel log, the goal was to provide the public a quick rundown of what vessels are at the Port, what vessels are due in soon, where they're coming from, and what they're carrying.

**Information Gathering**

The Port's vessel log is compiled, updated, and released every day as a simple table format. The Record publishes the Port's vessel log once a week on Sunday. Usually a daily log from Wednesday or Thursday is used to provide the paper a log by their Friday deadline (since the Port has ship call information weeks in advance, this timeline is not an issue).

**Design**

The Port developed a design template that has been used from the beginning of ad placement with The Record. This design includes the Port logo, a featured photograph that rotates each week, an informative factoid on the sidebar that rotates weekly as well, and the vessel log itself in table form.

**Distribution**

As previously mentioned, the vessel log is published each Sunday in ad space in The Record, the San Joaquin Valley's most widely read newspaper with a circulation for the Sunday paper of just under 168,000 viewers. It is also shared on the Port of Stockton's Facebook page, which currently has 8,619 followers. to get even more circulation.


The primary audience for these ads are readers of The Record. This means a wide, broad swath of the San Joaquin Valley that may learn some new things about the Port.

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

The strategy behind the vessel log is to attract attention and interest in the Port from the general public by pulling back the curtain and letting them know a little bit about what is going in and out and any given time. General newspaper readers who may otherwise have little to no knowledge of the Port's activities will be offered quite a bit of information from a single vessel log. In addition to the log itself, these ads also include a factoid that touts benefits the Port brings to the community (for example: "The Port supports more than 5,500 jobs in the San Joaquin County area!"). Readers can marvel and take pride in the economic activity the Port brings to their community.

The Port engaged its Communications and Public Involvement sub-contractor, HDR, to design the vessel log template.

Since the initial idea of the vessel log was conceived and designed, the timeline for creating the weekly logs is consistent and straightforward.



First, a mid-week daily vessel log is obtained from Operations. This information is then translated into the pre-designed template with slight adjustments for general public suitability. The log is then finalized and sent to the newspaper before its Friday noon deadline to appear in the Sunday edition.

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

Although no formal surveys have been conducting for the vessel log, the Port has received great positive feedback. Given the nature of newspapers, communication is a one-way street for the most part. However, since the Port publishes the vessel logs to Facebook as well, direct feedback is received in the form of comments. For every commenter that shares their reaction on Facebook, there's no doubt dozens or even hundreds of others who likely had a similar reaction but didn't share it, whether they saw the vessel log online or on paper.

Many comments show that the commenter had no idea so many ships from such far off places are docking at the Port. Many others react to the sidebar factoids, showing surprise at some of the statistics shared. Another common comment is something along the lines of: "Cool. Thanks for sharing!" Some commenters even ask if the Port is hiring, which implies the vessel log might have led them to conclude the Port could be a busy, rewarding place to work (it is!). These expressions of surprise, sometimes even amazement, and interest in employment prove that the vessel log has been very successful in bringing the community into the fold. More and more Stockton residents are learning that the Port is a bustling hub of commerce that brings huge benefits to the region.