



VIRGINIA PORT AUTHORITY

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## **AAPA Communications Awards Submission**

### **Category: Special Events**

**Summary of Entry:** In an effort to reinforce our capacity-building projects at our Norfolk International (NIT) and Virginia International Gateway (VIG) terminals, we created an ad for trade publications that summarized the projects in seven words: Two Terminals. Three Years. One Million Containers.

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

A \$350 million deal to improve one terminal (NIT) facilitated a \$320 million deal to improve another (VIG). By 2020, those projects will provide us the capacity to process one million additional container units through this port annually — a 40 percent increase overall. In this new era of larger ships and record volumes, it was critical to show the maritime trade that Virginia was investing heavily in its infrastructure in order to maintain our customers' trust and instill a sense of momentum.

#### **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.*

This ad highlights all three areas of focus for the port – operational excellence, fiscal responsibility and sustainable growth.

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

The goal of the ad was to inspire confidence in our customers and share our growth and momentum with the trade (and potential customers).

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

In addition to tight copy and captivating graphics featuring renderings of the final VIG and NIT projects, we included a vanity URL: [www.portofvirginia.com/momentum](http://www.portofvirginia.com/momentum). That URL features highlights of the port's Fiscal Year 2016 results that are further proof of our momentum: a 6% increase in imports, rail growth of 14%, and 41 business announcements with the potential to create 3,800 new jobs across the state.

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

While we've only had 119 unique visitors to the page since it debuted on March 1, those viewers have spent nearly 90 seconds reading the material on the page, which we view as a positive. Further, because the URL is featured on print ads, we assumed the visit rate would be significantly lower because readers are required to type in the URL manually rather than simply clicking on it.