



PORT OF STOCKTON – PUBLIC BOAT TOUR NARRATIVE

Audio-Only Presentations

The free boat tours of the Port of Stockton (Port) have captured the hearts of thousands of community members ranging in age from seniors to school age children. Each summer, attendees are offered a trip through time as they learn of the earliest maritime freight movement along the Delta while getting a fresh perspective of the current goods movement industry. While learning about history and the Port, attendees witness firsthand oceangoing ships passing by, longshoremen busy at work on the docks, and the abundant wildlife and habitat that call the Delta their home. This year's narrative included numerous updates to bring tour attendees up to speed on the Port's latest construction developments and trade statistics.

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

The Port has enjoyed a close relationship with the city of Stockton and the surrounding region since 1932, when the city passed the bond for the Stockton Deep Water Project allowing for the establishment of the Port. While the community works, plays, and goes to school, the inner workings of the Port are not likely on the forefront of people's minds. 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 generate interest and understanding of the Port's activities and their important role while creating a sense of shared prosperity.

Internally, the Port needed to develop the narrative content and make sure that it told the story of the Port while pointing out actual landmarks along the tour as they pass by. External factors that needed to be addressed included promoting the tours through various outlets and booking and carrying out the tours themselves.

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. The free boat tours primarily complement the second half of the mission, by bringing the local Stockton community closer to the Port and showing all the ways that the Port's large operation brings economic vitality to region. The tour also outlines how the Port's environmental initiatives protect the area's natural resources.

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

The first step in creating the boat tour experience was the writing of the narration script,



handled by Port staff. With the script updated and finalized, a professional narrator was selected out of dozens of qualified candidates. With the script recorded, Port staff tested it out on the water, noting necessary timing adjustments. An appropriately sized and outfitted boat, the California Sunset, was secured from a boat chartering company. Finally, the Port spread the word about the upcoming tours and people came in droves!

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

The Port promoted the boat tours through both traditional and online media. Press releases were written and distributed, describing the boat tours and giving times and dates for new ones. The tours were heavily promoted on Facebook and Twitter. Photos of the full boats were featured on these social media channels after the tours.

The Port engaged its Communications and Public Involvement sub-contractor, HDR, to coordinate the recording of the narration by a professional voice actor. Opportunity Cruises carried out the boat tours on their 80-capacity California Sunset vessel.

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

The tours have been a smashing success for five years running. 1,290 people enjoyed a boat tour in 2017 alone. Since 2013, 8,260 members of the community have experienced a firsthand view of the Port. These numbers are a clear indication that awareness of the Port is growing.

The Port conducted an online survey with attendees and their responses were glowing. 96% would recommend the tour to a friend and 97% found it educational. Here are a few quotes directly from the participants:

"I didn't know that there were so many boats coming in and stationed here at the dock. I didn't know that other people from around the world were coming in."

"Made me proud to be from Stockton."

"It was very informative. It would be good for grade school kids to go on a tour like this."

"We enjoyed the tour, and learned a lot about the Port of Stockton that we didn't know. It was very interesting."

Many individuals noted facts about the Port they just learned that they previously had no idea about. Some were excited to see the large ships up close while others felt nostalgic about the history. All tour attendees simply enjoyed the boat ride. Regardless of what they liked about the tour in particular, the experience brought every attendee a little closer to the Port.