

2018 AAPA Communications Awards Program

Entry Classification: Overall Campaign

Entry Title: The Port at the Heart of History

Summary

As a founding component of the City of Montreal, a key player in the settlement and industrialization of Canada and a responsible corporate citizen, the Montreal Port Authority (MPA) wanted to be at the heart of celebrations in 2017 marking the 375th anniversary of Montreal and the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada.

It created a special campaign, *The Port at the Heart of History*, with a three-pronged approach: an advertising campaign, an historical video and a social media initiative.

The campaign drew on the wealth of the port's rich history to highlight the benefits and value of port and shipping activities in Montreal both past and present.

The campaign was part of our continuing communications effort to raise awareness about the port with the general public, and in particular port neighbours, as well as with other stakeholders.



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

Challenges

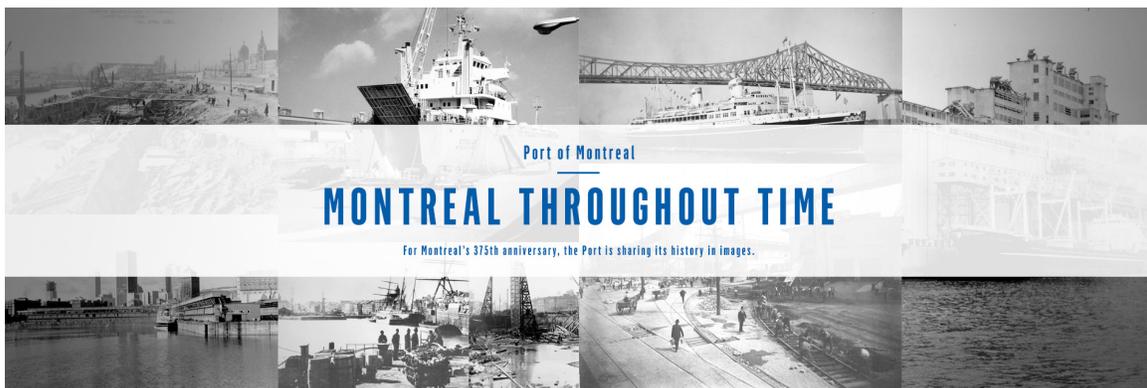
The Port of Montreal is a major international port that handles each year more than 2,000 ships carrying some 38 million tonnes of all types of cargo to and from all parts of the world and welcomes international cruise vessels and their guests.

The port stretches along 16 miles of waterfront and its cargo-handling operations are generally hidden from public view. It also is often confused with the Old Port of Montreal recreation and tourism site.

Our challenge was to create a wide-ranging campaign that would highlight Montreal's maritime heritage while at the same time provide Montrealers, and in particular port neighbours, with a greater understanding of how the port operates and deliver key messages about the impact of port operations on the economy and the role that the port plays in people's daily lives.

Opportunities

The campaign provided us with the opportunity to showcase the port's role as a founding element of the city and a key player in the settlement and industrialization of Canada, explain the port and project its image, deliver key messages about the importance of port and shipping activities past and present, highlight the port's benefits and value, and raise general awareness about the port.



2. How does the communication used in the entry complement the organization's overall mission?

The Port of Montreal is a North American seaport at the heart of the continent and a hub for world trade. Our mission is to contribute to the prosperity of our clients and partners and to the economic development of Greater Montreal, Quebec and Canada while respecting the environment. Our vision is to be a diversified, successful and innovative port that exercises inspiring leadership and provides competitive value-added services, making it a partner of choice in the logistics chain.

Within our mission, the campaign communicated our values of:

- Responsibility. The campaign demonstrated our willingness and desire to fulfil our role as a responsible corporate citizen, that we are a sustainable organization that values our neighbouring communities, the environment and our contribution to the economy, and that we act in accordance with the rules of conduct dictated by honesty, transparency and accountability.
- Commitment. The campaign confirmed our commitment to help Montrealers make the port their own and be proud to define themselves as citizens of a port city, and our commitment to create the best possible experience for our clients and partners.

From an historical perspective, the campaign reminded people that the port is the site around which the city's first neighbourhoods began to take shape. It depicted the port's pivotal role in the ethnocultural development of Montreal as the landing point for immigrants. It highlighted that the port was a key player in the socioeconomic development of the city, the province and the country, and helped strengthen trade between North America and Europe.

From a modern-day perspective, it raised general awareness about the port while demonstrating that the port is:

- A vital international cargo logistics hub that plays a major role in global trade, handling 38 million tonnes of all types of goods annually and connecting five continents and more than 140 countries to a North American market of 110 million consumers.
- A strategic tool for economic development and a catalyst for economic growth for Montreal, Quebec and Canada: port activity in Montreal is responsible for \$2.1 billion annually in added value to the Canadian economy.

- A creator of jobs: port activity in Montreal supports 16,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs.

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

Goal:

Our goal was to have the general public gain a greater appreciation of Montreal's rich port history and maritime heritage while at the same time familiarize themselves with current-day port activities and be able to better understand the importance of the port, its impact on the economy and the role that it plays in their daily lives.

Objectives:

- Deliver pertinent messages about the port in a clear, concise and visually appealing manner.
- Get closer to the community.
- Reach out to Montrealers and interact with them directly.
- Remind various stakeholders about the importance of the Port of Montreal.

Target Audiences:

Primary audience:

The port is generally hidden from public view and often mistaken for the Old Port recreation and tourism site. We use all opportunities possible to deliver key messages about the port to residents of Greater Montreal. This was our primary audience for the campaign, in particular our port neighbours – the 16,000 households within 1,000 feet of the port that we have identified are most concerned by port activity.

The port has made it a priority to strengthen and maintain dialogue with these neighbours. It is a partner in many projects led by organizations working to improve the community's quality of life, ensure its economic development and protect its environment. Through our Neighbours of the Port program, we hold information sessions to inform neighbours about projects in their area, and send them our *Logbook* community e-magazine as well as special invitations to certain events. Thanks to these initiatives, we know this audience quite well.

Secondary audience:

Federal, provincial and municipal government officials; associations, organizations and stakeholders that have strategic alliances with the port; business leaders; partners such as railways and trucking companies; port clients and potential clients including shipping lines and agents, terminal operators, importers and exporters, freight forwarders and logistics providers; teachers and students; and the media, including the general news media in Montreal.

We targeted these audiences in order to raise awareness about the port, showcase its competitive advantages, highlight its economic benefits and demonstrate its impact on everyday life.

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

As a founding component of the city, a key player in the settlement and industrialization of the country and a responsible corporate citizen, the MPA wanted to play a special role in and contribute to celebrations in 2017 marking the 375th anniversary of Montreal and the 150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada.

We developed a three-pronged strategy involving an advertising campaign, an historical video and a social media initiative.

Advertising Campaign

The Communications Department began working with the MPA's advertising agency, Ogilvy Montréal, in autumn 2016 to develop the advertising campaign.

Together, we came up with a theme that would make the most of the port's rich history. We wanted the campaign to have a playful tone and be oriented around historical facts that are both simple and impactful.

Three variations on the theme showcased the vital role that the port has played in Montreal's development through time:

- Avant de la fonder il fallait y débarquer (You have to go ashore to build a city).
- Avant les cargos il y avait des canots (Before cargo ships there were canoes).
- Par ici sont arrivés vos ancêtres (This is where your ancestors arrived).



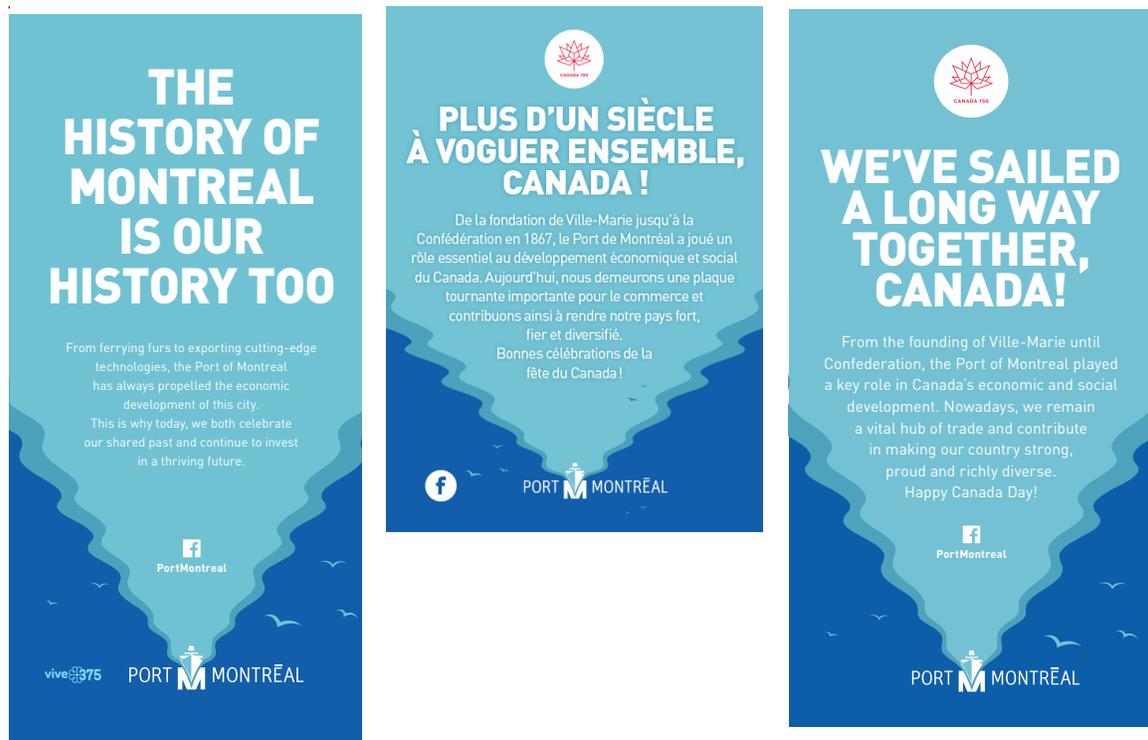
We launched the campaign with the digital advertisement *Avant les cargos il y avait des canots* (Before cargo ships there were canoes) on the French-language *La Presse* + information tablet product on February 24 as part of a special feature on the maritime industry.

Three days later, strategically located billboards started to pop up on streets near the Port of Montreal.



Billboards continue to be a visible part of the landscape, and professionals within the advertising industry consider billboard marketing to be one of the most effective advertising mediums available. Our billboard campaign covered three phases over a total period of 16 weeks: eight faces from February 27 to March 25, and seven faces from April 24 to May 21 and September 18 to November 12.

A second digital ad ran in *La Presse +* on October 1 in a special maritime transportation section. We also created special ads that were published in *La Presse +* and in the English-language *Montreal Gazette* daily newspaper on May 17, the date of Montreal's 375th anniversary, and on Canada Day, July 1, as a reminder to residents of Greater Montreal and the business community of the key role the port has played in the economic development of the city and country.



We also placed ads in specialized port industry and local business publications throughout the year.

We promoted the campaign on our Twitter account (2,125 followers) and Facebook page, where the majority of our 7,650 followers are residents of Greater Montreal, as well as on our more recent social media platform, Port Window, which provides a window on the port, its history, its players and its neighbours, and by sending out a *PortInfo Express* to the 6,000 people who subscribe to the e-newsletter:

<https://www.port-montreal.com/en/piexpress-feb-en.html#n2>

The budget for the advertising campaign was \$170,000.

To complement the advertising campaign, the MPA developed two digital products presenting a series of spectacular images.

Historical Video

We produced a video entitled *Trading with the World from Then to Now* and released it on our YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/A_evyqpiqLA.

Through a series of images combined with animation, the video, in two minutes and 25 seconds, brings Montreal's rich port history to life and shows how closely the Port of Montreal is tied to the city's birth and growth, and that it is a major international port that trades with the world.

A link to the video was sent to our e-newsletter subscribers. In addition to releasing it on our YouTube channel (200 subscribers), we also posted it to our Twitter account and Facebook page.

Four MPA Public Affairs and Records Management employees and five employees of Brad advertising agency, which specializes in storytelling specifically adapted to social media, worked on the video, writing the script to craft key messages and choosing images. The script was written and approved between October and December 2016. Brad then put the video into production, using images from MPA, City of Montreal and McCord Museum archives. The MPA and Brad created a production schedule to deliver the video in time for our Gold-Headed Cane ceremony, where we present a Gold-Headed Cane to the captain of the first-ocean going vessel in port each year, on January 4, 2017.

The budget for the video was \$38,000.

Social Media

The second digital product presenting a series of spectacular images was our *Montreal Throughout Time* initiative. The MPA worked with digital agency Ressac to develop a content strategy that would show the port as a founding element of the city and create goodwill with the public.

The MPA shared on a regular basis, from March 29 to December 15, 2017, the port's history in images, from the beginning of the 20th century when the port was expanding and starting to build its piers and basins, on its Facebook and Instagram (2,175 followers) pages, as well as on Port Window.

People were able to follow the port's history in images on Facebook at:

https://business.facebook.com/pg/PortMontreal/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1368266796566918

On Instagram at:

<https://www.instagram.com/portmtl/>

with some specific examples at the following links:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BccsuvsBW1M/?taken-by=portmtl>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BaKIN8kHts5/?taken-by=portmtl>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BXi8YIAAOv9/?taken-by=portmtl>

And on our Port Window at:

<http://lehublot.port-montreal.com/en/montreal-throughout-time-an-exclusive-peek-into-the-history-of-montreal-and-its-port/>

Ressac worked with our Communications and Records Management Departments to select exclusive archive images and develop accompanying texts. A new series of photos, covering subjects ranging from container terminals and the railway network to Grain Elevators No. 1 and No. 2 and the Iberville Passenger Terminal, were posted every two to three weeks.

The total budget for the social media initiative was \$5,000.

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

Reaction to the campaign was extremely positive. It succeeded in meeting the following objectives:

Objective:

Through our billboard campaign, we wanted to reach out to as many people as possible, in particular residents of Greater Montreal and port neighbours, raise awareness about the port, deliver simple, clear and concise messages, and get closer to the community.

Result:

Our advertising agency Ogilvy Montréal reported that the campaign delivered better-than-expected results.

Phases 1 and 2 (February 24 to March 25 and April 24 to March 21):

- Number of Gross Rating Points (GRPs) delivered: 385. Target: 285.
- Six extra days on eight faces.
- Number of impressions delivered: 16.3 million. Target: 11.1 million.
- 47% more visibility for an added value of \$14,048.

Phase 3 (September 18 to November 12):

- Number of GRPs delivered: 280. Target: 257.
- Three extra days on eight faces.
- Number of impressions delivered: 11.6 million. Target: 10 million.
- 16% more visibility for an added value of \$4,720.

Objective:

Through our media advertising campaign, we wanted to highlight the port’s economic benefits and showcase its competitive advantages to residents of Greater Montreal and the business and maritime communities.

Result:

Our advertising agency Ogilvy Montréal reported that our advertising campaign in *La Presse +* (half-screen advertisements in four issues) delivered better-than-expected results:

Issue	Number of estimated impressions	Number of impressions delivered	Number of impressions delivered over number of estimated impressions	Visits to the Port of Montreal website
February 24	136,500	148,029	108.45%	63
May 17	136,500	146,683	107.46%	63
July 1	120,700	172,682	143.07%	27
October 17	136,500	150,033	109.91%	217

Objective:

We wanted as many people as possible to see the historical video and its key messages.

Result:

From April 11, 2017, to late April 2018, the video had more than 1,300 views, while hundreds of people watched it at events and conferences, such as our Gold-Headed Cane presentation ceremony in January 2017.

Objective:

Through our social media initiative, we wanted to deliver messages about Montreal's rich port history and maritime heritage as well as information on the current-day port, the impact it has on the economy, and the role that it plays in people's daily lives.

Result:

Our digital agency Ressac said that the initiative was "a great success." Our Facebook page results show the following:

- Reach: 370,419 people
- Impressions: 1.13 million
- Engagements: 57,417
- Cost per engagement: \$0.08
- Engagement rate: 5.07%

"The overall performance with regards to engagement are very good with a cost per engagement of \$0.08 and an engagement rate of 5.07%. Content originality, targeting and the editorial content explain this strong performance," Ressac said.

We also received many positive comments from our Facebook page followers, such as:

- "Wonderful initiative to retrace these historic moments. The photos are also superb. The port is my favourite thing to follow this summer."
- "Great portrait of the evolution of a city thanks to its port. Great respect for all those (workers) who have been involved."

Furthermore, with regards to the overall campaign, in informal discussions, people told us that they enjoyed taking a trip through history, and many reminisced that their ancestors had arrived in Canada from overseas through the Port of Montreal. They said that messages about the port's benefits and value were delivered clearly and concisely. Many added that prior to seeing the campaign, they had little or no idea of the role that the port plays in their everyday lives and that it is responsible for delivering many of the items that they consume and use on a daily basis, from food products and fresh produce such as fruits and vegetables to electronic devices and paper products.

The campaign clearly allowed the general public to better understand the vital role that the port plays in the economic and social fabric of Montreal and in people's daily lives, and it expressed the port's desire to get closer to its community and fulfil its role as a responsible corporate citizen.