

AAPA 2018 Communications Awards
Port of New Orleans
Periodicals
Port Record

The Port Record has been published since 1942 as a means to promote the Port of New Orleans and its assets and engage customers, potential customers and the maritime community. It is used by our Commercial staff, Commissioners and customers to market the Port. The Port Record was published quarterly in 2017: Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall.

1. Challenges or Opportunities

The challenge is to promote the Port of New Orleans as the premier Port for a variety of cargo and cruises, but to do so in a journalism-style publication that is compelling and useful to the reader without the publication being an overt advertisement or marketing piece.

In addition to being able to talk about news and developments at the Port of New Orleans, we want to use the Port Record as an opportunity to promote New Orleans and Louisiana as a good place to live and do business: A thriving port equals a thriving local economy, and a thriving local economy equals a thriving port, underscoring the message “Seaports Deliver Prosperity.”

Because space is limited to about 18 editorial pages including the cover, strategic and well-planned stories and sections are necessary. Additionally, the staff required to create a print magazine needed to be addressed, and production timelines needed to be carefully planned.

2. Mission:

The Port of New Orleans mission is: To drive regional economic prosperity by maximizing the flow of international trade and commerce as a modern Gateway.

With the Port’s mission in mind, the content of the Port Record is crafted to illustrate the importance of freight-based commerce. Shippers, carriers, terminal operators, cruise lines, Class I railroads, and more are considered as potential sources for feature and news stories.

3. Planning and Programming Components:

Overall goals/desired results: A well-planned engaging magazine that serves to promote the Port of New Orleans, strengthen relationships and attract new customers and cargos. This is done with modern design and compelling content written and packaged in a journalism style rather than a straightforward promotional style.

Objectives: Create a publication that would serve as a marketing tool offering news and developments about the Port and its partners, as well as economic development in the region. Measureable milestones include: Staff feedback about its use as a sales tool; ad revenues; demand for the issues by our customers and our sales staff; CTR on digital editions.

Audiences: The Port Record's primary audiences include Port customers and tenants, potential new customers, members of the port community, legislators and other policymakers. Secondary audiences are Port staff and our Board of Commissioners.

4. Actions & Outputs:

Strategies: Before each issue, Communications has a planning session with the Commercial and Executive teams to identify a strong, well-rounded strategic editorial lineup that includes: news about the Port and our customers, important issues, our board and staff, economic development news for New Orleans and the state, and mentions or photos of key players in the maritime industry. The magazine's sections include:

- **Message from the CEO:** a personal letter from Brandy D. Christian written to share her perspective on current Port NOLA priorities. This usually covers Port news or issues that are important to the industry.
- **Inside Story:** Short features on news or developments that require more than a news brief but less than a longer cover story. There are typically one to three of these per issue.
- **Cover Story:** A more in-depth look at Port news, developments, assets or issues, economic development news, etc. Quotes from key stakeholders from the Port, our tenants and customers, and other members of the maritime industry.
- **News Stream:** News briefs with news from the Port and the maritime industry, as well as economic development news from New Orleans and the state.
- **Port Connections:** A photo section of industry events such as conferences, maiden voyages, tour groups, receptions, presentations, etc. Since people like to see themselves or people they know in print, this is an opportunity for us to show faces and names of key people in the Port community. This also gives us the opportunity to promote our partners and key industry people.
- **Shipping Spotlight:** A closer look at a company involved in freight-based shipping with the Port of New Orleans and why doing business with the Port is strategic for them.
- **By the Numbers:** A quick reader-friendly page with a focus on a facet of the Port or economic development news. By the Numbers is usually presented in infographic-style.
- **Final Frame:** The last page in a magazine is traditionally a highly-read page, and we use this page to offer a strong parting image of the Port or the port community.

Tactics & Implementation Plan:

- Two designated Communications staffers plan, write and edit the magazine as well as maintain the mailing list. The budget is about \$1,000 per issue for freelance photography and other potential needs.
- The timeline from content planning meeting to publication is typically 12 weeks.
- 6,000-8,000 copies are printed for each issue. 5,000 copies are mailed to members of the port community and potential customers, while the remaining issues are used for port marketing efforts at trade shows, conferences, etc. A digital version of each issue is also posted on our website and shared on our social media platforms.
- The magazine is laid out, printed and mailed by an outside publisher, who does this at no cost to the Port; in exchange the publisher retains all advertising revenues.

5. Outcomes & Evaluation

Communications outcomes: General anecdotal feedback is that the Port Record is a good read with news and information that is important to the Port community, our Board and our customers. Our Commercial team finds it useful in their sales and customer service efforts. Our Community Outreach and Environmental teams use it as a popular education tool as well. We receive a steady flow of inquiries to be added to the mailing list.

Evaluation of success:

- Ad revenues: The Port Record brought in approximately \$65,000 last year in advertising revenues for the publisher and that number continues to trend upward.
- Demand for the Port Record: Our Commercial staff and reception areas can't keep the magazine in stock. We receive frequent requests for hard copies and the link to the digital publication version to be sent to members of the maritime community. There is also a high demand for the Port Records in the Port's New Jersey, Tokyo and India offices.
- Survey: In 2017, we included a reader survey in two issues of the magazine and made it available online as well to prompt reader feedback. Responders ranked the Port Record 8.5 out of 10 in value for getting information about Port NOLA. No negative feedback was shared in the surveys. The following are some of the responses we received:
 - Content most valuable:
 - "Stories on new facilities, major projects, cargo trends, various tenants and MTOs."
 - "Photos"
 - "Trends and articles highlighting the port's facilities"
 - "Articles outlining businesses"
 - Content you would like to see more of:
 - "Port plans for the future"
 - "I always enjoy the photos that show facilities and how things are built/manufactured"
 - "Photos of the Port"
 - General comments:
 - "I think you do a great job with this publication and the Port is a highlight for the city."
 - "Enjoy the publications."
 - "Nice publication"
 - "Keep up the good work!"