



2019 AAPA COMMUNICATION AWARDS SUBMISSION

Port of Baltimore

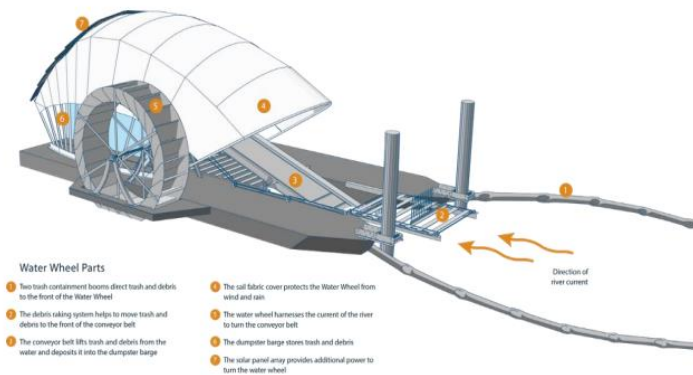
“Captain Trash Wheel”

Classification 7: Miscellaneous

Port Category: 3

Summary:

As part of an offset from construction of the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration's (MPA, also known as the Port of Baltimore) Masonville Cove Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF), the MPA's Harbor Development team was tasked with finding projects that met certain mitigation criteria. Knowing the Baltimore Harbor suffers from an abundance of trash and debris paired with the need for an offset project, the MPA partnered with the Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore; a group of private enterprises that works closely with Baltimore City to manage, promote and advocate on behalf of the downtown waterfront harbor. Their Healthy Harbor Plan has a goal of making Baltimore's Inner Harbor Swimmable and Fishable by 2020, focusing heavily on the removal and prevention of aquatic litter.



Clearwater Mills, a local environmental tech company, invented a highly successful solution to this problem and was commissioned by the Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore to construct the first Waterwheel Powered Trash Interceptor (Trash Wheel). The MPA co-sponsored the creation of the first two, now known as Mr. and Professor Trash Wheel. The success of the two interceptors was so monumental that the MPA commissioned its own, Captain Trash Wheel.

The MPA has engaged the community throughout the process of the naming, unveiling, and management of Captain Trash Wheel's social media accounts. The result has been multifaceted, from engaging and educating the community, garnering local and national media coverage, and as of April 1st, 2019, just shy of its first anniversary, has prevented a whopping 9.83 tons of rubbish and debris from entering the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River, feeding into the Chesapeake Bay.

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

Concept/Creation

Opportunities:

- Communication surrounding the concept and creation of the MPA owned Trash Wheel provided local media with information for additional coverage, highlighting our commitment to environmental initiatives. It also allowed the MPA to encourage the community to submit suggestions for naming the newest Trash Wheel. The winner of this contest was Baltimore's Lakeland Elementary and Middle School.
- Leveraging the previously established, Waterfront Partnership managed, Mr. (2014) and Professor (2016) Trash Wheels social media platforms to engage their followers about the MPA Trash Wheel, driving buzz to individuals outside of the Port of Baltimore social media followers.
- Once the name Captain Trash Wheel won our community poll, we conceptualized an image that would complement the name and outsourced a graphic designer to create an avatar for its social media presence.



Challenges:

- Waterfront Partnership holds the intellectual property rights over the “humanization” of any Waterwheel Powered Trash Interceptor, creating a challenge for the humanization of Captain Trash Wheel. The MPA would not have been able to include the iconic brown googly eyes if it had not been able to overcome this challenge.
- Gender Identity was a challenge during the creation of this Trash Wheel. Mr. identifies as a male, and Professor identifies as a female which created a concern for favoring gender. The MPA’s solution ended up being a progressive opportunity to create an inclusive gender-neutral personality.



Social Media

Opportunities:

- The opportunity to show a lighter side of what the MPA does as a state agency has been a wonderful way to deepen the connection and reach within the Baltimore community.
- The MPA Communications team controls The Captain’s social media platforms, allowing the Port to share educational information and special events at Masonville Cove, inviting and engaging the community.
- We work closely with our partners at Maryland Environmental Service (MES) and Living Classrooms Foundation (LCF), who run the day-to-day events and activities at the MPA owned Masonville Cove. Through this partnership we are able to keep The Captain’s social presence current and relevant.
- MPA’s subscription to Getty Images and Adobe Creative Cloud allows us to keep images associated with content interesting and exciting for our followers.

Challenges:

- There are a lot of partners with whom the MPA needs to communicate with in order to get various pieces of information, which can occasionally be challenging. To alleviate this hurdle, a shared calendar was created for Masonville Cove’s events.
- Due to budget constraints as a State agency, the MPA relies on scheduling and optimizing through the native platform scheduling tools on Facebook and Twitter, which can be quite time consuming when juggling multiple platforms.



- The amount of fresh, creative copy and images that go into a robust social media presence like this can be challenging at times. Particularly when it comes to recurring events that take place on the Masonville Cove Campus.

Special Event, Captain Trash Wheel Unveiling

Opportunities:

- Masonville Cove hosts an annual Environmental Festival for students in the community. The MPA used this as an opportunity to schedule Captain Trash Wheel’s unveiling during the festival.
- This event was held at Masonville Cove, which is open to the public so there were no security restrictions like we generally have for other events on our terminals. This presented an opportunity to invite Lakeland Elementary & Middle School, local media, and community members to welcome The Captain to its new home.
- The media coverage surrounding this event presented the opportunity to increase social media followers and extend our reach to a larger population in Maryland through news coverage. A total of seven local media outlets attended this event, two print publications and five television stations.



Challenges:

- Terrain and location. The Masonville Cove Campus is 70 acres of water and 54 acres of restored wetlands, nature trails and a protected bird sanctuary. Captain Trash Wheel is located at the mouth of a stream that flows into the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River; its location is not the easiest terrain to traverse. This was a challenge to get sound equipment, a podium and adequate seating set up. An additional challenge due to the terrain was getting media equipment out to the event site.



Captain Trash Wheel reports for duty at Masonville Cove in South Baltimore

Captain Trash Wheel @CaptTrashWheel · 14 Jun 2018
 I'd like to thank @TheoHayesWBAL and @wbaljfro for making their musical debut on @wbaltv11 by singing this catchy little tune! I love starting my day to it!
 #CaptainsInTheHarbor #CaptTrashWheel #wbal #Singing



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

With a mission of stimulating the flow of waterborne commerce through Maryland in a manner that provides economic and environmental to the citizens of the State, the MPA believes that taking responsibility for clean air, land and water complements, and drives good business as well as supports our communities. The Trash Wheel complements the organizations mission by:

- Offsetting adverse effects of various construction projects
- Reducing aquatic litter destined for the Chesapeake Bay
- Supporting innovative technologies
- Meeting or exceeding State and Federal water quality regulations
- Providing community outreach and educational promotion
- Partnering with and supporting local environmental companies
- Increasing exposure of the GreenPort of Baltimore initiative

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

Goal:

The primary goal of the MPA was to support the GreenPort of Baltimore initiative by closely aligning with the stewardship of Maryland's natural resources and the well-being of neighboring communities.

Completed Milestones:

- Developed project scope to be submitted to the State
- State approved and allocated funding for an MPA owned Waterwheel Trash Interceptor
- Launched and completed a successful poll to name the Trash Wheel
- Established social media pages
- Planned, executed and installed the Trash Wheel at Masonville Cove
- Outsourced the creation of an avatar
- Completed a one-month operational test for trash removal
- Humanized Captain Trash Wheel by adding the iconic eyes
- Released media advisory for unveiling event
- Conducted a successful unveiling event
- Sent out a press release regarding the launch of Captain Trash Wheel
- Ongoing, continual management of social media presence

Objectives:

- To promote nature conservancy and the importance of proper waste disposal through educating our social media followers.
- To promote educational events at the Masonville Cove Campus.
- To create and manage a fun personality for the Captain that will bring a smile to people's faces prompting them to engage with our social media accounts.
- To drive families to Masonville Cove, the nation's first Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership, to connect urban communities to the value of wildlife refuges and other conservation landscapes.

Primary Audience:

- Elementary, middle and high school students
- Nature and birding enthusiasts
- Communities throughout Baltimore City
- Conservationist groups

Secondary Audience:

- Parents and Educators
- Communities throughout Maryland
- Local Media

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

Strategy:

The MPA worked closely with our partners through conception, launch, and social media management to ensure a successful, effective and entertaining Captain Trash Wheel.

Tactics

The MPA engaged our partners and employed the following tactics to complete specific milestones:

- September 2017
MPA and Waterfront Partnership coordinated efforts for scope submission
- October 2017
State of Maryland approved funding for the project
- October 2017
MPA created Name That Trash Wheel poll community
 - Press release sent as invitation to submit suggestion
 - Poll created through Google
- November 2017
MPA communications staff created social media presence for The Captain
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
- November 2017 – March 2018
Clearwater Mills coordinated build, moved and installed the Waterwheel
- February 2018 – May 2018
Waterfront Partnership ensured our legal teams were aligned for humanization of the Trash Wheel
- March 2018 – May 2018
Outsourced graphic designer created Captain Trash Wheel's avatar
- June 2018
MPA, Clearwater Mills, MES and LCF coordinated unveiling event
 - Attendee invitations
 - Media Alert
 - Sound equipment, podium and seating setup
 - Unveiling of Captain Trash Wheel
 - Social media posts through event

- June 2018
Press Release sent after successful event
- November 2017 - Present
MPA communications continued management of The Captain’s social media pages
 - Photographs taken by MPA staff
 - Getty Image downloads
 - Supplemental data from Clearwater Mills
 - Post suggestions from MES and LCF
 - Image suggestions from MES and LCF
 - MPA created copy
- June 2018 – Present
MPA Outreach Team, MES and LCF continued management of educational programming
 - Host field trips and school groups
 - Captain Trash Wheel educational game

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

The MPA owes the success of this project to all its partners, to Clearwater Mills and to the Baltimore community. The evaluation methods are employed through media coverage and social engagement. Total earned media value during the month of June for The Captain’s unveiling event was approximately \$80,000.00.

1. Objective:

To support the GreenPort of Baltimore initiative by closely aligning with the stewardship of Maryland’s natural resources and the well-being of neighboring communities by implementing an appropriate mitigation project to offset the adverse effects from MPA DMCF construction.

Result:

Captain Trash Wheel has been operational for just under 11 months and has prevented 9.83 tons of trash and debris from entering the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River, feeding into the Chesapeake Bay.

2. Objective:

To create a thriving social media presence that engages and educates the community.


Result:

From the conception of Captain Trash Wheel’s social media pages, the MPA has successfully engaged the community:


Social Media Platform	Followers
Facebook	777
Twitter	878
Instagram	1,090

Anecdotal Feedback:

Most liked Facebook post, 184:



 **Captain Trash Wheel**
Published by Jillian Ball [?] · June 5, 2018 · 🌐





Luckily, I did so well during basic training this past month that I prevented 3.7 tons of trash from entering the Chesapeake AND received my Captain's license today! #TheCaptainsHere #ReportingForDuty #CaptainsInTheHarbor #CaptTrashWheel



👍 Get More Likes, Comments and Shares
Boost this post for \$30 to reach up to 20,000 people.

4,532 People Reached **1,080** Engagements [Boost Post](#)

  Jeff Scott, Suz Kashnow and 184 others 12 Comments 25 Shares

 Like  Comment  Share 

Follower Comments:

Dann W. when referring to Captain, Mr. and Professor on a “Merry Trashmas” video post:
“3 of my favorite super heroes!”

Stephanie P. when referring to a post about nesting Bald Eagles at Masonville Cove:
“That’s totally amazing, you’re going to have so much fun watching them!”

National Aquarium replying to a post about the Captain travelling to Masonville for installation:
“Welcome to the neighborhood, Captain!”

Katrina J. in response to an invitation for a nature walk at Masonville Cove with a funny photo:
“LOL!! Thanks for the invitation Captain!!”

Anecdotal conversation with the Enoch Pratt Baltimore Library system on Twitter:

Captain Trash Wheel @CaptTrashWheel · Apr 8
It's National Library Week! Have you been to your local Enoch Pratt Free Library? They have cool things planned for the month of April! Gonna use my googly eyes to read some books on conservation #atthepratt ... Can trash wheel's get a library card?
#CaptainTrashWheel #MDOTgreen



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PrattLibraryMeg @PrattLibraryMeg · Apr 12
Replying to @CaptTrashWheel
We'd be honored to have Captain Trash Wheel as an official @prattlibrary customer! #atthepratt



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Captain Trash Wheel @CaptTrashWheel · Apr 12

Thank you @PrattLibraryMeg for making my dreams come true 😍😍 My favorite books are by @jk_rowling ! I love imagining myself being a #wizard 🧙 where I could #scourgify litter into its proper receptacles living that #MDOTgreen life!!



PrattLibraryMeg @PrattLibraryMeg

Replying to @CaptTrashWheel

We'd be honored to have Captain Trash Wheel as an official @prattlibrary customer! #atthepratt

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PrattLibraryMeg @PrattLibraryMeg · Apr 12

Replying to @CaptTrashWheel @jk_rowling

We've got her whole collection just waiting for you (and anyone else in Maryland with a @prattlibrary card) catalog.prattlibrary.org/client/en_US/d...

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