

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 (Port NOLA) 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.

In 2018, after years of consideration and conducting a reader's survey, Port NOLA transitioned the Port Record from a quarterly print magazine to an electronic newsletter that is sent every two months to a stakeholder list of 5,000 people.

1. Challenges or Opportunities

Port of New Orleans' quarterly print magazine, Port Record, was a marketing tool that had been published since 1942. However, the way people get their information has changed, so we have had to adapt the way we reach our audiences. In order to better serve our readers and stakeholders, we needed to reach our audiences in a timelier manner with a more effective digital reach.

We also wanted 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 newsletter that is compelling and useful to the reader without 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."

To accommodate the digital attention span, strategic and well-planned story extracts, images and sections are necessary.

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, videos and collaborative content.

3. Planning and Programming Components:

Overall goals/desired results: Replace our Port Record from a quarterly print magazine with a more frequent and engaging digital "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 content written and packaged in a journalism style rather than a straightforward promotional style. The full stories are accessed via links and hosted on Port NOLA's website.

Objectives: Create an electronic newsletter that would increase readership and help our stakeholders access Port NOLA information more frequently than was possible with a quarterly print magazine. It will also serve as a marketing tool offering news and developments about the Port and its partners, as well as economic development in the region. Measurable milestones include: Open rates, click rates and requests to be added to the subscription list.

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:

We did not take the move from a familiar traditional print product to a digital format lightly:

- Surveyed Communications teams at other U.S. ports: overwhelming moving away from print and putting their resources toward digital outreach.
- Performed a reader survey in print Port Record issues, asking readers what they valued about the magazine content and how they prefer to receive their information. We received about 30 responses out of a mailing list of about 5,000 so that low response rate spoke for itself.

Before each issue, the Communications team (2 staff) has a planning session 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:

- **Lead Story:** One, or occasionally two, stories that are deemed most important and placed at the top of the newsletter with teaser copy to encourage clicks.
- **Inside Story:** Three short features on news or developments that require more than a news brief but less than a longer cover story. Their headlines urge clicks.
- **Video:** Interactive link for readers to click through and view one of Port NOLA's videos.
- **Snapshot:** One photo with a detailed cutline to promote our partners and key industry people, or other significant events.
- **Fast Fact:** A "By the Numbers" type of statement to impart a bit of information about one of Port NOLA's four lines of business to the reader. Links to the applicable Port NOLA website page.
- **In The News:** Links to recent media coverage Port NOLA received.
- **Port News:** Links to Port NOLA website Press Release page.
- **Work at Port NOLA:** Links to Port NOLA website Jobs page.
- **Upcoming Board of Commissioners Meeting:** Provides the next meeting dates and links to Port NOLA website Board Meetings page.
- **Your Port Your NOLA:** Provides information regarding the monthly public boat tours to encourage engagement and links to the Port NOLA Public Events webpage.

- **Pathways to Procurement:** Encourages businesses to engage with the Port and links to the Port NOLA Procurement webpage.
- **Subscribe Here:** Included as a link for new subscriber requests.

Tactics & Implementation Plan:

- Two designated Communications staff plan the newsletter lineup.
- The newsletter editor compiles recent news and writes new content as needed, assigning some stories to other staff as capacity allows.
- The stories are edited by a minimum of two staff.
- The newsletter editor sources the images.
- The newsletter editor creates each of the website content pages to link to the newsletter.
- The newsletter editor creates a new masthead for each issue.
- The newsletter editor builds the email in the ESP Constant Contact.
- The newsletter is tested by a minimum of three staff to ensure readability and links are enabled correctly.
- The timeline from content planning to publication is typically 4 weeks.
- Using the ESP Constant Contact, an issue is emailed every two months.
- The newsletter editor collects analytics for each issue to share with senior staff.

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. We receive a steady flow of inquiries to be added to the mailing list. Additionally, our reach is further extended when the newsletter and its links get picked up and forwarded by our stakeholders through their digital channels.


Evaluation of success:

- Demand for the Port Record: The number of Port Record subscribers has increased with each issue, now totaling over 5,000.
- Anecdotal compliments are received with each issue.
- Each issue receives minimal unsubscribe requests.
- In the first year of digital publication, the 2018 Port Record Analytics are as follows:
 - 7 issues – Jan/Feb; March/April; May/June; Jul/Aug; Special Aug edition to announce website; Sept/Oct; Nov/Dec
 - Average Open Rate: 26.47%
 - Average Click Rate: 18.26%
 - For comparison, companies sized 50+ have an average open rate of 22.8% and click rate of 2.75%. Business-related newsletters average between 20-22% open rates and about 2.6% click rate overall. We are trending above average on open rate and we are surpassing click rate standards by leaps and bounds.

An image of the beginning of a recent issue of the Port Record electronic newsletter:

Volume 8 | January/February 2019

PORT RECORD





THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT OF NEW ORLEANS | JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019

Port NOLA Raises the Bar with New Container Record in 2018

The Port of New Orleans (Port NOLA) moved more containers in 2018 than at any time in its history, totaling 591,253 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), up 12.3 percent compared to one year ago. The record marks the fifth year in a row Port NOLA has surpassed the half million TEU mark at its Napoleon Avenue Container Terminal, which is operated by New Orleans Terminal and Ports America.

[Read More](#)






Port NOLA Sets Cruise Passenger Record


The Port of New Orleans (Port NOLA) set a new record in 2018 with 1,182,111 cruise passenger movements, up 2.3 percent compared to a year ago. A 23 percent surge in guests taking Mississippi River cruises helped buoy the total, with new and larger ships set to sail from New Orleans both in the Caribbean and on the River in 2019.

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Port NOLA, Ports America Expand Partnership for Long-Term Growth

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Port NOLA to Host Journal of Commerce Breakbulk & Project Cargo Conference

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Board Elects Arnold B. Baker Chairman

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The Port Record webpage can be seen [here](#), with image below:

PORT NOLA
THE PORT OF NEW ORLEANS

PORT INFO BUSINESS CRUISE COMMUNITY

PORT RECORD

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The Port Record is your resource for timely Port NOLA news and important announcements. To get the bi-monthly e-newsletter delivered to your email inbox, email Laura Martinez at laura.martinez@portnola.com.

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DATE
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