

2019 AAPA COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

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2019 State of the Port Address



THE PORT OF
VIRGINIA®



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Taking place over three days (April 9 – 11, 2019) in three different cities, The Port of Virginia’s 2019 State of the Port Address (SOTP) provides the port community with a comprehensive update on the port’s operations, finances, infrastructure projects, economic impact and much more. This year’s theme was “Building the Capacity for Greatness” – a nod to the capacity-creating projects that the port is currently undertaking at its two largest container terminals.

Led by The Port of Virginia’s CEO and Executive John F. Reinhart, the State of the Port Address has grown to be one of the most anticipated and successful events in the port’s markets. The 45-minute address with a 15-minute Q & A session is a tightly-constructed powerpoint presentation, complete with image-driven slides with eye-catching facts, along with embedded videos that acted as bookends, opening and closing the address.

The first video was an energetic, music and action-driven short piece that set the tone for the rest of the presentation. The closing video served as a “thank you” to our customers, stakeholders, partners, and more that have worked with us during our construction.



Figure 1: Cover slide for the 2019 State of the Port Address

I. CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

There were two key challenges that we faced when presenting the 2019 SOTP:

1) **Logistical Challenges:**

- a. Organizing a multi-day, multi-location event is challenging in and of itself. Thankfully, the port has great partners to work with and coordinate. The Hampton Roads Global Commerce Council (HRGCC) presents the SOTP event in Norfolk, Virginia. The Virginia Maritime Association (VMA) presents the SOTP events in Richmond and Front Royal, Virginia. We chose those markets because the port has terminals in each of those markets.

2) **Messaging Challenges:**

- a. Simply put, there is a great deal of information that we need to share in our annual address. We worked hard to organize and crystallize the information in a way that lent itself to a strong and easy-flowing narrative.

II. SUPPORTING OUR MISSION & BUSINESS OPERATIONS

The Port of Virginia’s mission includes the phrase, *“Above all, we will remain responsible members of the communities we serve, a valuable resource to our customers, an excellent place to work, and an economic engine for the region.”*

The State of the Port Address provides us with an engaging format to demonstrate our commitment to environment, operational, and economic sustainability by educating our wide variety of audiences about our efforts and sharing demonstrable results. Examples shared in the report include:

“We will remain responsible members of the communities we serve...”

- The port provides up to \$1 million annual to municipalities across Virginia through its “Aid to Local Ports” program

“...a valuable resource to our customers...”

- The port is investing more than \$1 billion to improve land and water infrastructure to better accommodate Ultra Large Container Vessels (ULCVs)
- The port’s new Truck Reservation System has enable the port to move over 85% of its truck volume through its gates in under one hour – while still handling near-peak volumes.

“...an excellent place to work...”

- 1 in 6 interns at the port earn full-time positions at The Port of Virginia

- The port’s tuition reimbursement program helped 32 port employees further their advanced education by providing up to \$5,000 in tuition reimbursement per employee per year.

“...and an economic engine for the region.”

- The port helped generate 2,400 new jobs to date in FY2019.
- New and expanding port customers invested more than \$700 million in expansion initiatives throughout the Commonwealth.

III. PLANNING & PROGRAMMING COMPONENTS

The port’s marketing and communications team worked closely with staff at the VMA and the board of the HRGCC in order to ensure the event was properly planned, promoted, and supported from an A/V perspective. In addition to the SOTP address, the VMA-held events also featured remarks from the VMA’s president and recognition of a VMA board member. The HRGCC event featured remarks from the HRGCC president, as well as the presentation of an award to the US Coast Guard for their efforts in keeping the port open and driving the economy.

IV. ACTION PLAN & OUTPUTS

Port colleagues began working with VMA and HRGCC staff in October 2018 to plan and prepare for the April 2019 events.

Taking lessons from previous SOTP events, we opted to make one major change to this year’s event: we flipped the order of the presentations. For years past, the SOTP event always kicked off in Hampton Roads, followed by an event in Richmond, and then closed on the third day with the SOTP address in Front Royal – going from largest market to smallest market. However, we opted to flip the order so that our largest crowd (420+ attendees in 2019) got the benefit of a well-practiced and rehearsed presentation. The first two events went really well, but we were able to provide John with some feedback on the presentation that really helped drive home our key points.

VMA and HRGCC began sending out “Save the Date” emails to potential attendees in late January/early February. The port, VMA, and HRGCC then began a steady “drip campaign” of emails, social media posts, and pieces in each other’s newsletters to promote the event and drive registrations.

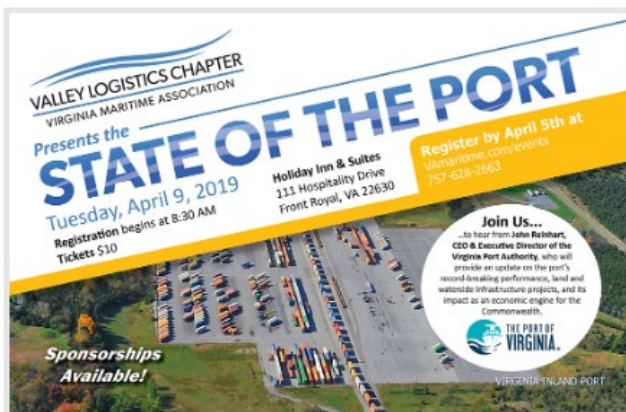


Figure 2: Invitation to the Richmond State of the Port event

Figure 3: 2018 Sustainability Report Production Schedule

In January, port colleagues in the marketing and communications team drafted a script and storyboards for the “thank you” video and opening video. Production began with scheduled shoots on terminal and the hiring of a voice actor to read the script for the “thank you video.” Drafts of the presentation were reviewed with the CEO and the final version of the presentation was ready by April 3, 2019.

All three SOTP events broke attendance records. The SOTP event in Front Royal was a breakfast and had approximately 80 attendees. The Richmond event, a lunch, had approximately 125. The final event in Norfolk was the largest ever, with approximately 420 registered attendees.

V. OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

All three SOTP events broke attendance records. The SOTP event in Front Royal was a breakfast and had approximately 80 attendees. The Richmond event, a lunch, had approximately 125. The final event in Norfolk was the largest ever, with approximately 420 registered attendees.

To download and view the State of the Port presentation, click here: <http://bit.ly/2019-POV-SOTP> (for best results - please download and run the presentation directly from your machine. Due to the large file size, streaming the presentation may cause errors or disruptions in the presentation. To play the presentation, simply open Powerpoint, go to the “SLIDE SHOW” tab on the top menu, and select “From Beginning.” Advance slides by using the arrows on your keyboard.

To view the opening video, click here: <https://vimeo.com/329819037>

To view the “thank you” video that closed the presentation, click here: <https://vimeo.com/329820042>