



PORT OF STOCKTON - “LONG RAIL JOURNEY”

Videos

In order to improve Union Pacific’s railway network, the Port of Stockton (Port) and other international partners came together in an innovative project to build, deliver, and distribute ¼ mile lengths of “long rail” railroad track for distribution in Union Pacific’s 32,000-mile network throughout the western United States. The video, Long Rail Journey, tells this unique story of international collaboration and ingenuity resulting in an improved railway network for Union Pacific.

1. WHAT ARE/WERE THE ENTRY’S SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES OR OPPORTUNITIES?

According to comScore, online video continues to expand. By some estimates, online video accounts for more than 70% percent of consumer internet traffic. Video is utilized by millions of businesses of all types to highlight their products and services. Add to this support through social media, and you have a very effective and powerful marketing and sales tool. With an expanding profile among international customers and stakeholders, the Port of Stockton continues to grow its business by attracting high-value customers and business partners. Long Rail Journey tells a unique and compelling story of international collaboration and ingenuity. It is a story that resonates with customers, partners, and the public, so it made for an ideal video that could appeal to the Port of Stockton’s core constituency plus add credibility to our position as a strong contender among West Coast Ports for high value customers with bulk cargo.

The Port had several internal and external challenges to address. The key to any online video is to rise above the noise of so many competing videos, and to make sure the content will resonate with the target market. - in this case potential customers, tenants, and stakeholders. To do this the Port decided to highlight a unique story of ingenuity and commitment - and to promote the video through on-line and social media outreach to the target audiences.

We also had to select a video production company that we could trust to produce an ambitious video with international production requirements. We had to provide that production company with a vision for what we wanted, the facts and figures to flesh it out, and access to the partners and customer representatives best able to tell our story. Working with the right production company is critical to the success of the product.

Finally, we have the on-going issue that many potential customers and partners often are unaware there is a port in Stockton. So we emphasize how sophisticated our operations and infrastructure is, and position ourselves as the “can-do” Port who you want to partner with for success. Long Rail Journey is an impressive case-study that highlights this value-added support provided by the Port of Stockton.



2. HOW DOES THE COMMUNICATION USED IN THIS ENTRY COMPLEMENT THE ORGANIZATION'S OVERALL MISSION?

The Port of Stockton likes to emphasize what it calls, a “can-do spirit.” This is actually evident in their work with customers, partners, and the public, and is often pointed to as a differentiating characteristic of the service the Port provides. Another articulated mission of the Port is “Global Reach, Local Pride.” Long Rail Journey is a wonderful story of literally “going the extra mile” for international customers with a confident sense of accomplishment, and it positions the Port as a leader on the West Coast that can meet the needs of major customers depending on multiple international stakeholders no matter the challenge.

Port management knows that it does not operate the Port in a vacuum. There are many interested stakeholders within the Port's constituency. The Port realizes it's critical to share its operations with the communities they do business in through transparency and education, cultivating good relations, reciprocity, and understanding. The port's public-facing videos provide a high-value asset for informing local and international partners and stakeholders - plus anyone with an interest in Port operations - of their activities. Long Rail Journey ultimately tells an engaging story that their local community can be proud of as well as their international partners and customers.

3. WHAT WERE THE COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMPONENTS USED FOR THIS ENTRY?

The goal of the video is to provide a brief, high-impact communications instrument with intrinsic interest value to share on its website, social media, and at events with partners, customers and the public. It is intended to highlight an amazing story of how unique cargo (ribbon rail) is manufactured in Asia, then is loaded onto a specially designed ship, undertaking an oceanic crossing, and completing its voyage with a 10-hour passage up the San Joaquin River to its destination port at Stockton. The video communicates clearly that ships arriving from all over the world can make the Port of Stockton a key partner in the process of deploying all types of cargo throughout the western United States. It is a very compelling case-study, which makes it easy for the primary audience of potential customers and partners to see how committed the Port of Stockton is their success. The film also resonates with secondary audiences, including local officials, agency personnel, and the general public, especially the local community within the Stockton area. It is a story that can be a source of pride for all Port stakeholders.

The major objectives that were identified to meet this goal include:

Effective, strategic use of the video

To do this we leveraged our extensive email list and used other social media platforms such as twitter, Facebook combined with personal appearances to ensure the video and its message was disseminated. With over one thousand views already, and dozens of screenings at public events, we consider this a success.



Port of Yawata
Kitakyushu, Japan



TOMOMICHI I
Metal Products
Sumitom



JASON KAT
Director of Maritime
Port

Reaching our audience

Catering our outreach to the Port stakeholders, and business organizations of related companies that use Ports was essential in getting our message out. In addition, personal appearances in which the video is highlighted in presentations to many stakeholder, affinity organizations, and community groups helps guarantee that our target market understands the benefit of the business and operational advantages of the Port of Stockton.

Audience

The primary audiences for this piece are prospective customer company decision-makers and partner with responsibility for evaluating site locations for a company's business operations.

The measurable milestones determining effectiveness are:

- a. Number of views via the website's analytics
- b. Number of times the video has been screened at events and gatherings
- c. Types of comments that are anecdotally gathered from viewers by staff
- d. Number of times it is shared and posted
- e. Number of times it is embedded on other web sites and social media

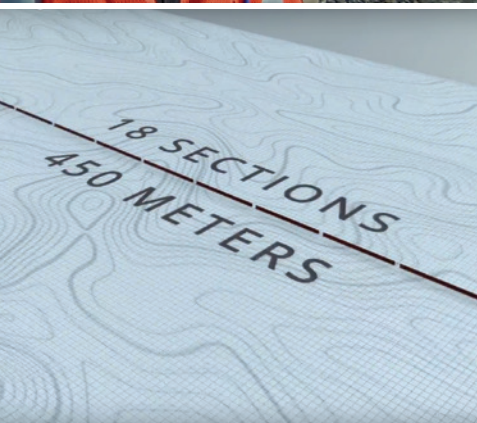
4. WHAT ACTIONS WERE TAKEN AND WHAT COMMUNICATION OUTPUTS WERE EMPLOYED IN THIS ENTRY?

Long Rail Journey tells a very unique and compelling story of international collaboration and ingenuity. The Port of Stockton realized it presented a great opportunity to demonstrate the Port's efforts and "can-do" spirit in helping to make Union Pacific's dream of long rail a reality. By becoming a principle partner in the project, it not only gave the Port of Stockton significant business, but also significant credibility within the Western Port community. It is quite an accomplishment, and worthy of a documentary style video that they can show to potential customers, partners, and the public.

To understand the context, Union Pacific had a significant challenge: they needed to improve their network by installing long sections of rail that are safer and require less maintenance. However, the steel "ribbon-rail" for their railroad is made in a foundry in Japan, and then needs to travel all the way to California to be assembled and distributed into their railroad network in the western United States.

Tasked with figuring out a strategy to meet this challenge, the Port of Stockton, Sumitomo Metal Corporation, Holland LLC, and other international partners came up with a process to forge steel rails 150 meters in length in a foundry in Japan, then load these rails onto the Pacific Spike, a ship built exclusively for this purpose, then take the rails to the Port of Stockton, where three sections of rail are welded together into a 450m length of rail that is then distributed in customized railway cars throughout Union Pacific's 32,000 mile network to be installed into their railroad network. This requires facilitation by dozens of partners and thousands of people to keep the process moving throughout the year.

Telling this story through video came with its own communication challenge: it was a very complex story, and to be effective the filmmakers would need to follow the entire process from the pouring of the molten



steel in the foundry to the final spiking of the new rail onto the railway, all the while keeping the story compact to maintain viewer interest, but with enough detail to show the inherent ingenuity of the process. The production required significant preparation and multiple days of filming in Japan, California, and Nevada in addition to motion graphics, aerial footage, and many other elements needed to help tell the story.

Timeline

- Week 1 – Research and brainstorming
- Week 2-3 – Planning, storyboarding, and scriptwriting
- Week 4 – The Port approves storyboards and script, schedules shoots with partners
- Week 5-6 – Video shoots occur
- Week 7-9 – Post-production
- Week 9 – Port approves final version, places video on website and social media

With consistent evaluations at the pre-production, production, and postproduction stage, the progress of the video moved forward with everyone’s approval and satisfaction. Taking a “documentary style” approach, it’s no small chore to synthesize the message. The video had to be a compelling case study, highlighting the overall story of success that resulted from international collaboration and ingenuity. We believe we accomplished that balance of viewer interest and video length - while still maintaining a consistent message in a visually dynamic video.

5. WHAT WERE THE COMMUNICATIONS OUTCOMES FROM THIS ENTRY AND WHAT EVALUATION METHODS WERE USED TO ASSESS THEM?

This has been one of the port’s most popular video presentations. It never fails to attract a crowd and put smiles on people’s faces. Being very short may be a factor, but comments suggest that the program has many interesting features. First, viewers love the music, “Flight of the Bumble Bee,” that is matched to the program. It’s frenetic pace matches the sped up motion of the time-lapse photography. Secondly, most people have no idea that large, ocean-going ships transit up the San Joaquin River and through the Sacramento-Bay Delta to get to the port. There are numerous bridges that local residents recognize that are identified. Additionally, the passage is rather beautiful if somewhat challenging with its narrow channel and sharp turns. It’s also quite fascinating to see the different kind of weather and seas the ship encounters on its voyage across the Pacific.

There is a lot packed in to a short time frame, starting in Japan and winding up in Stockton, CA. The public comments reveal astonishment that their little city is tied to global trade, as well as fascination for the varied voyage that delivers a ship to their own local port. People express a sense of importance and pride in the knowledge that what they may have considered a fairly provincial place has world significance. The program changes attitudes without saying a word. We’re quite pleased with the subtle impact this entertaining, but revealing, program has on our community members and beyond.