



## PORT OF STOCKTON - TIME LAPSE “FROM PORT YAWATA TO THE PORT OF STOCKTON”

### Advertisements

This short, 1.5 minute video is a condensed and sped up account of the “Pacific Spike’s” journey from Port Yawata in Japan, across the Pacific Ocean to its berth at the Port of Stockton (Port) in California. The Pacific crossing is notable for the different types of weather the ship encounters, but the real challenge begins once the ship enters San Francisco Bay. This is the start of the 75-mile inland journey up the San Joaquin River, where ships must pass numerous navigational challenges: bridges, narrow channels, sharp turns, and private boats. The 10-hour passage finally culminates in the tug-assisted docking of the ship at the Port. The entire hyper-animated program is appropriately set to the music, “Flight of the Bumblebee.”

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

Not many regional residents realize that the Port is an international port participating in the global trade network. Some may not even know that there even is a port in Stockton, positioned as it is, 75 miles inland from the California coast. This brief video, using a very entertaining approach, acquaints the uninitiated as to the important role the Port of Stockton plays in world trade. It shows the size of ships it accommodates, and the hazardous journey they navigate coming up-river from San Francisco Bay to dock at the Port.

Nothing is as powerful and revealing as actual video footage covering an event that is so essentially visual. Still images or written descriptions don’t do justice to a ship’s trans-oceanic passage from a port of departure to its destination port thousands of miles and weeks away. The Port wanted the most revealing, dramatic, and even entertaining, means of demonstrating what arriving and departing ships do and where they go to give the casual observer a real account of shipping traffic.

The main internal and external factors revolved around the complex logistics of planning the video capture of a long-distance, international event. Permissions and cooperation from various foreign entities had to be secured. Timing and scheduling had to be determined. Travel arrangements and in-country resources had to be determined and acquired. Further logistics and travel arrangements were left to the film crew, including obtaining an equipment carnet. And of course, the language barrier and time zone difference presented additional difficulties. Suffice to say that this was a very complicated undertaking that required the close communication and coordination of both internal staff and the other individuals involved.



Pacific Spike Leaves Port Yawata, Japan  
October 24, 2017



Pacific Spike Enters San Francisco Bay

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

The Port values its relationship with city of Stockton and with the citizens of the region. The Port makes a strong effort to be a good citizen and recognizes that it can and does contribute to the quality of life in the area. In addition to being one of the largest employers in the area, the Port also undertakes a leadership role in adhering to responsible practices such as operating within strict environmental guidelines. As such, the Port wants these roles and responsibilities known to the community, not just to cultivate good will and a good image, but to model for the community how it is possible to conduct oneself both responsibly and profitably.

Port management knows that it does not operate what is effectively a large industrial site and operation in a vacuum. There are many diverse opinions in a medium-sized community, and the Port operates in very close proximity to that community. Therefore, it's critical that the Port shares its operations with the community in the interests of transparency and education, cultivating good relations, reciprocity, and understanding. The Port's public-facing videos provide a high-value program for informing local residents and anyone with an interest in its operations.

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

The Port wanted a very short, high-impact communications instrument with intrinsic interest value to share on its website and at public events. It was intended to share a representative example of one ship's journey leaving a distant foreign port, 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 arrive from all over the world at the Port of Stockton, and the last leg of their journey poses unique challenges that are deftly managed.

The measurable milestones continue to be:

- a. Number of views via the website's analytics
- b. Number of times the video is deployed at events and gatherings
- c. Types of comments that are anecdotally gathered from viewers by staff

The primary audience is the general public. Secondary audiences are prospective tenants, local officials, agency personnel.

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

This short video program is actually re-purposed from another, longer program entitled, "Long Rail Journey." It was decided that isolating the journey and creating an entertaining time-lapse treatment would provide for an entirely different product that could be deployed as a narrative-free

Richmond-San Rafael Bridge



Carquinez Bridge



Benicia-Martinez Bridge



short. It could be used in ways and settings that differed from the original, long program, and it could focus strictly on the transit aspect of global shipping.

The request was made of the production company to apply their creativity to heighten the entertainment value without diminishing the importance of the content. By utilizing fun, but not disruptive, music, the transit aspect was emphasized. At the same time, a “story” could be told with simple titles that identified the two ports, a geographic region, and bridges that charted the ship’s progress. In this way, the program has a clear starting point and finish line. The experience in between anchors audience interest.

As mentioned above, the material for this short video program was collected during production of a longer narrative program that was shot in Japan, the San Francisco Bay Area, Stockton, and even in the deserts of Nevada. That project was elaborate and complex, and as such, required as much as three months of planning. An experienced video production company with which the Port has worked extensively was hired to undertake preparations for the international and domestic filming. Port staff and the production producer communicated extensively among themselves and with the ship owners in Japan. It was also necessary to obtain cooperation with a parent Japanese company in Tokyo, even though Port Yawata is on an entirely different Japanese island.

The short program wasn’t undertaken until the long program was completed. In fact, the Port of Stockton’s communications director didn’t conceive of the this short program until the “Long Rail Journey” was complete and he realized the value of creating a separate time-lapse video exclusively of the ship’s journey from Japan to the Port of Stockton. Upon completion, this short time-lapse program was premiered along with several other video programs created for the port at a “red carpet” event for a select community event. It has been a staple and a favorite ever since.

## **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.

Antioch Bridge



Pacific Spike Arrives at Port of Stockton  
November 10, 2017

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.

