



**PORT of  
SAN DIEGO**  
Environment

# #THATSMYBAY

**Pollution Prevention Outreach Campaign**

Stakeholder Awareness, Education & Involvement  
AAPA Award Submission

Submitted June 2019

# #ThatsMyBay Pollution Prevention Campaign

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## I. Summary of the Campaign

The San Diego Unified Port District (PoSD) is proud to submit this 2019 American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA) Environmental Improvement Awards nomination for its new pollution prevention campaign, *#ThatsMyBay* in the Stakeholder Awareness, Education & Involvement category. *#ThatsMyBay* takes a new innovative approach to educate the public on pollution prevention in support of PoSD's mission to champion and promote a healthy San Diego Bay. This social media campaign seeks to increase environmental stewardship among tourists and San Diego residents who visit the San Diego Bay by creating brand identity and using empathic visual imagery to promote pollution prevention.

PoSD launched this truly innovative campaign in June 2018. *#ThatsMyBay* offers a “fresh take” on stormwater pollution, focusing on PoSD's priority pollutants: trash, metals, and bacteria. The approach takes a serious and dry topic and makes it fun and interesting by combining memorable characters and catchy social media messaging.

The outreach campaign uses a series of approximately 30-second videos with “tips” on how to keep the bay clean, each video featuring a specific environmental behavior change. With over six million impressions during the first 10 months of the campaign, *#ThatsMyBay* has exceeded expectations and is well on its way to achieving its original goal of two million impression in FY20. The campaign has had measurable success on social media platforms and at events, resulting in numerous marketing awards.

While still relatively new, the campaign has already demonstrated a positive impact on the San Diego Bay community by encouraging the target audiences to help keep the Bay

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healthy. Components of *#ThatsMyBay* extend beyond social media with live events to create additional opportunities for the public to learn about and get involved in pollution prevention. In addition, the strategic framework from which the campaign was developed enables *#ThatsMyBay* to grow with PoSD's needs and adapt to various pollution prevention scenarios ensuring the campaign can be timeless.

## II. Goals and Objectives

- Improve quality of water and land health through pollution prevention
- Address PoSD's priority pollutants: trash, metals, and bacteria
- Utilize best management practice compliance and implement the San Diego Bay Watershed Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP)<sup>1</sup>
- Achieve two million impressions by FY20
- Build pride in and ownership of the Bay so environmental messages are more likely to resonate
- Increase proper waste management to assist with meeting PoSD's Climate Action Plan greenhouse gas emissions

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the WQIP and for the full document visit [http://www.projectcleanwater.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2&Itemid=19](http://www.projectcleanwater.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2&Itemid=19)

### III. Discussion

#### A. Background

The San Diego Bay is a treasured resource for local businesses, residents, and visitors. PoSD champions maritime, waterfront development, public safety, experiences, and environment, all focused on enriching the relationship people and businesses have with the dynamic San Diego Bay. Keeping pollution out of the Bay is a critical step in protecting the Bay water quality and the beneficial uses the Bay provides. PoSD developed and launched the pollution prevention social media campaign, *#ThatsMyBay* in June 2018.

The campaign started brainstorming on how the behavior change pollution prevention campaign should look and feel. A whimsical feel was immediately agreed upon to avoid an aggressive tone. Next, key messages were developed to address stormwater priority pollutants: trash, metals and bacteria. A master messaging document (see Attachment A) was created to be the campaign's living framework document, allowing the team to keep track of large amounts information in one place.

#### *Innovative Fresh Approach*

*#ThatsMyBay*, was selected based on the fun play-on-words designed for social media to build a sense of ownership for the San Diego Bay. *#ThatsMyBay* gives the public the opportunity to become an environmental champion and help keep the Bay healthy so generations to come can enjoy the natural beauty. Most campaigns only

focus on one issue or behavior change. *#ThatsMyBay* does not limit the focus to one topic, but instead hits a broad range of pollution prevention activities the public can do.

### ***Unique Campaign Champions***

PoSD developed a set of lovable characters with fun names that can't stop telling the world *#ThatsMyBay*. The campaign has been developed to be long-term and evergreen by enlisting these lovable characters to take multiple calls to action. See Attachment A to learn more about each character. The characters have been a huge hit with the viewers, especially Trash Trooper Troy and Lil' Wrapper, see Attachment B for a full report on a survey conducted on the videos which resulted in overall positive findings.

### ***Brand Identity***

PoSD's campaign has created a distinctive brand identity with memorable characters, fun social media posts, and witty scripts. As a result, the videos are more memorable and likely to catch the eye and deliver the message without coming off as "preachy" and unrelatable to the public. The heart logo was also specifically selected as it invokes ownership, love, and pride in a clean environment. The campaign's name is also the campaign's social media hashtag which keeps the campaign relevant and easily searchable on social media platforms.

The campaign has a dedicated landing page on PoSD's website at <https://www.portofsandiego.org/thatsmybay> to allow for easy access for the public to learn more about pollution prevention

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## ***Beyond Social Media***

The *#ThatsMyBay* campaign has gone beyond social media with “*#ThatsMyBay* Service Day”. – a signature cleanup event where PoSD employees and the public can help clean up the bay. This event shows the campaign and PoSD are not only talking the talk on pollution prevention, they are walking the walk. Events also allow for an opportunity to showcase the characters. Trash Trooper Troy and Hang On Hank have made appearances at numerous events since the launch of this campaign.

PoSD has also strategically purchased promotional items branded with the *#ThatsMyBay* logo. The items are not only purchased from environmentally friendly companies, but their uses support the campaign’s goal to create environmental champions. Promotional items are a great way to increase foot traffic to a booth during an event and having items such as a trash picker that are useful for furthering behavior change makes this campaign even more innovative. See Attachment A for example of events and *#ThatsMyBay* promotional items.

## **B. Objectives and Methodology**

This social media campaign seeks to increase environmental stewardship among tourists and San Diego residents who visit the San Diego Bay by creating brand identity and using empathic visual imagery.

The campaign targets a broad range of PoSD waterfront visitors and employees, who are attracted to the waterfront, but may not necessarily think of it as an environmental resource. Overall, the San Diego Bay watershed has a population of over one million people. Estimated visitors to San Diego County can reach upwards of 30 million per year.

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In addition, the San Diego Bay and PoSD's tidelands parks, waterfront activities and businesses are popular attractions for San Diego County residents and visitors. As an example, in 2017 alone over one million people attended permitted activities on PoSD Tidelands.

### ***Use profiles and audiences***

The demographics used for selecting and targeting key audiences included populations representing equal male and female, within PoSD's five member cities<sup>2</sup> (Tideland visitors, in house visitors, out of town visitors, event organizers, and business users). Psychographics targeted for this campaign include many types of Tideland visitors including but not limited to: park users, picnickers, highly outdoor lifestyles, joggers, watersports, environmental enthusiasts, along with PoSD staff and tenants.

## **C. How the Project Meets the Award Criteria**

### **1. The level and nature of benefits to environmental quality, beautification or community involvement:**

The *#ThatsMyBay* pollution prevention campaign encourages the community to become environmental champions and better the health and beauty of the San Diego Bay. The campaign engages with PoSD users and adjacent communities through a variety of social media platform, advertisements, and events. The campaign benefits environmental quality and beautification by engaging the public to implement stormwater pollution prevention practices. Due to the Bay being the receiving water for a large watershed, educating the community on preventing urban runoff that is not

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<sup>2</sup> The PoSD's five member cities include San Diego, National City, Chula Vista, Imperial Beach and Coronado.



entirely composed of rainwater is critical to preserving the Bay's resources.

## **2. The level of independent involvement and effort by the Port:**

This campaign's creation, development and implementation has been entirely funded and completed with in-house staff from PoSD's Marketing & Communications and Environmental Protection departments. This uniquely independent approach enables a greater synergy with PoSD's overall mission, vision, values, and culture.

## **3. The creativity of the solution or programs:**

The campaign is innovative in many ways. *#ThatsMyBay* approaches the topic of pollution prevention, which can be dry and serious, with humor, and fun. Memorable characters, fun hashtags, and witty scripts also are more likely to catch the eye and deliver the message without coming off as "preachy" and unrelatable to the public. *#ThatsMyBay* utilizes strategically placed advertising for social media to ensure the right audience is reached in the most effective way. PoSD uses geo-fencing to direct social media posts to visitors of PoSD's Tidelands and the demographics filters used direct the posts to an audience that is more likely to be interested in learning more about pollution prevention. *#ThatsMyBay* has a focused marketing and media plan designed to reach the target audience in a much less overtly commercial way, giving the campaign the underground, quirky, and social vibe it needed.

As described in Section III.A. the campaign goes beyond social media with live events and promotional material allowing for even more ways for the public to get engaged.

## **4. Whether the project or program results are apparent:**

### ***Direct Social Media Results***

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The campaign delivered over six million impressions in less than a year, and over 220,000 video views. An impression is a marketing industry term for every time a video or photo is viewed. The YouTube videos averaged between 80% and 90% watch times, far above the standard 30-40% (Attachment A).

Additionally, a survey was recently completed in April 2019 to gauge the efficiency of the *#ThatsMyBay* videos. Overall the findings were positive; see Attachment B for a full report. The survey demonstrated that the campaign appealed to a broad range of San Diego residents and highlighted the important messages of pollution prevention without appearing to be aggressive in tone.

### ***Direct Public Engagement***

The campaign also expanded to numerous events around the Bay. On September 20, over 300 PoSD employees and members of the public teamed up at “*#ThatsMyBay* Service Day” to clean six sites along the waterfront. Nearly 3,000 pounds of trash were collected, preventing it from entering San Diego Bay. The event had widespread media presence and participation, plus, special appearances from *#ThatsMyBay* characters, Trash Trooper Troy and Hang-On Hank. A second *#ThatsMyBay* Service Day is scheduled for November 7, 2019.

PoSD also sponsored the 2019 Oceanology International Americas (OiA) conference. At this international conference and guests were able to watch all the *#ThatsMyBay* videos, attend a *#ThatsMyBay* reception, and network with Port staff to learn more about the campaign. The conference venue was open to the public, allowing all who passed by to see the campaign.

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## **Accolades**

*#ThatsMyBay* has won a [2018 MarCom Gold award](#), a [2019 Gold AVA Digital Award](#) and a [2019 Platinum AVA Digital Award](#). The campaign has also been well received in the stormwater world with positive feedback from education outreach groups in both San Diego County and Orange County, the San Diego Port Tenants Association as well as Board members and staff from the San Diego Water Board.

### **5. The cost effectiveness of the activity or the program:**

*#ThatsMyBay* was conceived and executed entirely in-house with video production, photography, design, and media placement allowing for the campaign to be cost effective.

All videos except for the animated Lil' Wrapper were written, filmed and edited in house by PoSD staff. While the actors, makeup artists, and at times photographers have been outsourced, primary development and implementation has been in-house talent from the videographer, director, sound tech, to the editor and graphic designer. By using PoSD employees, the cost savings are substantial.

Additionally, by educating the public on proper pollution prevention, PoSD saves money in the long term. With more people and industries implementing pollution prevention there will be less maintenance required on land and less need to clean out trash in the Bay reducing the overall maintenance and cleanup costs.

### **6. The transferability of the technology or idea to the port industry:**

Proximity to the receiving water creates a challenge for coastal ports where water quality protection is a high priority and pollution prevention activities must complement other

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important and key port functions. This is where an outreach campaign that creates both an awareness of benefits of clean water along with behavior changes tips and concepts to support pollution prevention is important and applicable to ports worldwide. The messages and behavior changes promoted through *#ThatsMyBay* are easily transferrable to the port industry. The campaign is designed to connect upstream audiences; whether tourist, resident, or worker, to the value of clean water in the bays and harbors which is a useful tool for any port.

## D. Conclusion

Pollutants can adversely impact aquatic wildlife, negatively affect human health, degrade environmental quality, and reduce the aesthetics of coastal environments. The Port of San Diego's *#ThatsMyBay* pollution prevention campaign is an innovative educational social media campaign that has proven success in reaching the San Diego Bay community. Given the early success of *#ThatsMyBay*, the long-term potential for instilling positive behavior changes and preventing pollution in and around San Diego Bay is high. Everyone can be an environmental champion and say *#ThatsMyBay!*