

AAPA 2020 Communications Awards
Entry Category: Community and Educational Outreach
Port of New Orleans
Entry Name: Port NOLA 101



Summary: As part of the Port of New Orleans' (Port NOLA) community engagement efforts, the Port offers "Port 101" presentations, which give a high level overview of Port NOLA and our four lines of business through an engaging presentation. In 2019, the public affairs team gave 73 Port 101 presentations.

Port 101s are given to elementary school groups, clients, public boat tour attendees, foreign dignitaries, fellow Port officials, university students, industry partners, Port employees and beyond.

1. What are/were the entry's specific communications challenges or opportunities?

In previous years, Port 101s were typically reserved for the Port's Public Boat Tour and Speaker's Bureau requests. In 2018, the Port was becoming inundated with boat tour requests. Internally, we realized we were at a point where we no longer had the bandwidth to accommodate each group. In 2018, the Port gave over 100 boat tours, each taking roughly 2 hours. So moving forward in 2019, we knew that if we chose to cut back on giving tours, we would need to supplement it with something else. With so much demand from a wide variety of stakeholders to learn about the Port of New Orleans, we realized we had an opportunity to capitalize on that interest through Port 101 presentations.

As such, the [Port 101 Powerpoint was designed and edited](#) to serve as the crown jewel of the Port's community engagement efforts to meet the demand for Port content, without the same time commitment as giving a boat tour. Each Port 101 presentation can be tailored to run between 20 minutes to an hour, depending on the audience. [A video of the Port 101](#) Powerpoint presentation with narration was later created to be available to audiences who could not attend in person during the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders.

2. How does the communication used in this entry map back to the organization's overall 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.

As an economic engine for our region and state, and as a Louisiana state agency, it is our responsibility to engage with interested parties and educate the public about our mission. After our safety briefing, the first slide of each Port 101 presentation is our mission and vision. It is crucial for us to convey who we are, our purpose and how our four lines of business position us as a modern gateway for the region, state and country.

In mid-2019, we began to use Port 101s as part of the employee onboarding process to teach new hires about the Port and our mission. Our Public Affairs and Human Resources teams agreed that if new hires can understand the Port's purpose and how they as an employee fit in to the bigger picture, they could more effectively carry out the Port's mission in their role.

3. What were the communications planning and programming components used for this entry?

The goal of each Port 101 is to increase stakeholder awareness of the Port of New Orleans. Each presentation details our four lines of business: cargo, cruise, rail and real estate, as well as our sustainable development and workforce development initiatives. The Port 101 Powerpoint has a modern clean look to match the Port NOLA branding. The graphics and photos are animated for maximum impact. Two port videos are included in the Port 101: [Your Port Your NOLA community video](#) and our splash video, ["Opportunity Calls, We Answer."](#)

Our objective was to reduce the number of boat tours given in 2019 by at least 25% by supplementing them with Port 101 presentations, while providing insightful and compelling Port information to the public.

The primary audience for a Port 101 is any stakeholder group that is interested in learning more about the Port of New Orleans—residents, school groups, economic development organizations, regional leadership cohorts, tenants, employees, etc. **The secondary audience** for a Port 101 is any colleague, family member, friend, etc. of someone who has attended a Port 101 presentation. We always encourage Port 101 attendees to refer us to a friend, and we believe that the more people we educate about the Port, the more positive sentiment we can generate within our community.

4. What actions were taken and what communication outputs were employed in this entry?

We gave strong consideration into what content would be featured in the Port 101 presentation. We wanted a presentation that would be informative, yet accessible to a number of audiences and not an overly technical presentation that could just be understood by someone who works within the industry. Based off of anecdotal feedback, we noticed a trend that the Port 101 seemed to be more effective in conveying the Port's role than the boat tours were. Knowing this, we advertised the Port 101 presentation more frequently to our community stakeholders than we had promoted the boat tour previously. The Port's community engagement manager is responsible for editing and serving as the point of contact for all Port 101 presentations.

5. What were the communications outcomes from this entry and evaluation methods used?

In the 3rd quarter of 2019, we began using surveys to measure the content comprehension of each Port 101 presentation. We learned that each attendee who sat in a Port 101 claims an increase in their understanding of the Port of New Orleans.

Anecdotally, after each presentation, participants share that they learned so much and look forward to telling their colleagues, friends or family about the presentation. Thank you emails and calls that we have received in the past also echo these sentiments.

Since we have shifted our focus to giving more Port 101 presentations, we have actually engaged more stakeholders than we had previously with boat tours. This is due in part to the fact that boat tours are limited to 23 guests, whereas the average Port 101 presentation can range from 20-250 attendees. We have also received a greater number of requests for Port 101s than we have for boat tours. In 2019, 73 Port 101s were given, with over 1,600 individuals who attended a presentation. In comparison, 61 boat tours were given, with just over 1,000 total attendees.