

**2020 AAPA Communications Awards**  
**Entry Category: Overall Campaign**  
**Port of New Orleans**

**Entry Title: Disney Wonder 2020 Kickoff Campaign**

**Summary:** Disney Cruise Line's Wonder made her first scheduled call to Port NOLA in February 2020. In order to highlight this exciting occasion, Port NOLA launched a kickoff campaign that was totally Disney related. We posted videos of the ship, asked locals and visitors to share their favorite Disney movies and favorite things to do in New Orleans via our social channels, and created a social media buzz around the maiden voyage of the Disney Wonder from New Orleans. The day of the first call, we and the Disney team cohosted a plaque exchange and welcome event for the Wonder with local elected officials, Port NOLA



commissioners and business leaders. Disney also worked with us to invite local reporters and officials an inside tour of the boat, which made for great publicity in the local region. Additionally, we assisted Disney hosting local public affairs professionals from local, state, and federal emergency management entities that would be working directly with the Disney Wonder for a lunch-and-learn event aboard the vessel while she was in port. Internal staff was also included in the festivities with a Port-sponsored, family-friendly bon voyage sendoff for the Wonder's inaugural sailing from Port NOLA followed by a Disney movie screening party in the Port Auditorium.

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

**Our challenge** was to create a buzz and hype on our social platforms for the arrival of the Disney Wonder, which coincided with the kickoff of the New Orleans Mardi Gras season. The challenge was to have people focus on our content and get the public and our local leaders excited about Disney, while Mardi Gras is such an important time for the City of New Orleans.

**Our opportunities** Disney was such a big deal for the New Orleans market that it was booked out well in advance. We knew that people were so excited for the Wonder to come in town so we had to capitalize on the initial excitement, while beginning to plan for our events surrounding the maiden voyage.

We drafted posts weeks in advance to prepare for the launch, gathered videos from Disney, and created our own videos and content.

We saw the opportunity to engage locals who were traveling or may want to travel on Disney in the future and to create an overall excitement in the city that we were having a Disney ship in New Orleans. We also wanted to make our Port employees feel ownership and part of the Disney win.

**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. When the community and our policymakers recognize the Port as an economic engine bringing in new and exciting things to our city, such as the Disney Wonder cruise ship, we are fulfilling this mission. We must continue to promote and showcase our work and share the importance of cruising and new ships to the City. New and exciting things keep our visitors wanting to come back for more.

Cruise business is a huge part of Port NOLA's economic impact. At Port NOLA 90% of cruise guests travel from out of state, with 73% spending a day or two in New Orleans either before or after their cruise. All of these passengers and ship crew spend an estimated \$129.1 million in the regional economy, while the cruise lines spend another \$125.2 million. The activity is new money injected into the state economy.

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

**Our goal is** to convey to the public that our cruise business synergizes with our region's other great economic engine—hospitality, and it brings our local maritime industry directly to our visitors and connects to the City of New Orleans' important hospitality industry.

#### **Our objectives:**

- To explain how this translates to economic impact in our community, but also generate overall excitement and buzz to get people talking about Disney and in turn translate into its importance.
- Gain following from the local community by breaking social media posts records
- Attendance of at least 50 local elected officials, media members and public affairs professionals on board the Disney Wonder to share our messaging.

**Our Audience:** Primary audiences include tourists and locals in our community, elected officials, public affairs officials at local entities, all members of our community, as well as the media. Secondary audiences are potential future travelers, Port staff and our Board of Commissioners.

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

- Draft post content weeks in advance and plan out how we will execute engagement at all levels with 2 Communications staffers.
- Calls and discussions with Disney on the media event and the plaque exchange event to prepare and execute.
- Brainstorm idea for Disney social media kickoff campaign, develop content and messaging to surround this campaign.
- Development of a comprehensive media outreach list for New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Biloxi media markets for the inaugural media day event on Feb. 7.
- Development of a contact list for local elected and public officials to be used by Disney for invitations to the inaugural event on Feb. 7.
- Development of a contact list of public affairs/PIO staff (41 stakeholder staff) to be used by Disney for invitations to the lunch-and-learn event on Feb. 14.
- Share each individually developed list with Disney to send invitations to.
- Work with Disney the day of on the execution.
- Attend all three events with the officials, media and public affairs team to share relationship importance with Disney, assist with photos, assist with speaking presentation and plaque exchange.

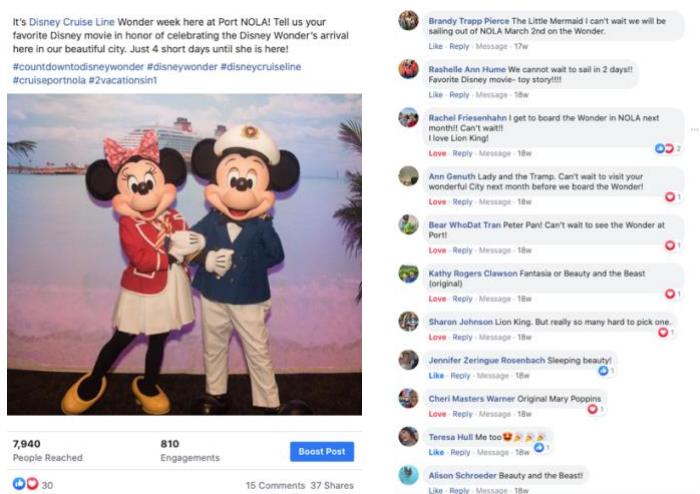
- Assist with tours given on the Disney Wonder ship to media, elected officials and public affairs professionals.
- Post multiple times a week about the #DisneyWonder coming to New Orleans, specifically executing our #CountdownToDisneyWonder. Began sharing content and engaging the public approximately two weeks before for our countdown.
- Posting the week of the arrival with Disney Wonder Week social posts on all channels.
- Share photos of local elects and local community visitors on board the ship.
- Distribute press release on record cruise numbers for the previous year after Disney's first sailing.
- Have our staff photographer get shots of the Disney Wonder departing from New Orleans to be used in current and future campaigns. Photos are here: <https://portno.canto.com/b/NHBJB>
- Host an employee movie night to garner internal support and ownership for the importance of Disney being here in our market.

**5. What were the communications outcomes from this entry and what evaluation methods were used to assess them?**

**Our overall measure of success was that Disney announced a return to New Orleans for the 2021 season while we were still in the process of executing the inaugural season. This was a huge win for our cruise business.**

General anecdotal feedback is that everyone was impressed on Disney's arrival. We got positive notes from the Lieutenant Governor and Mayor, who also both shared the event they attended on their social media channels. We received feedback from Port NOLA employees on the movie night that they felt it was so nice to be a part of the big celebration for the day of Disney arrival. We also heard great things about the social media campaign from locals and visitors who enjoyed seeing our content and, most importantly, commenting back with their favorite Disney movie or thing to see in New Orleans to share with Capt. Mickey for his big arrival to Port NOLA.

Feedback was also anecdotal by the number of participates we had in our social media engagement campaign for the public. One example is here:



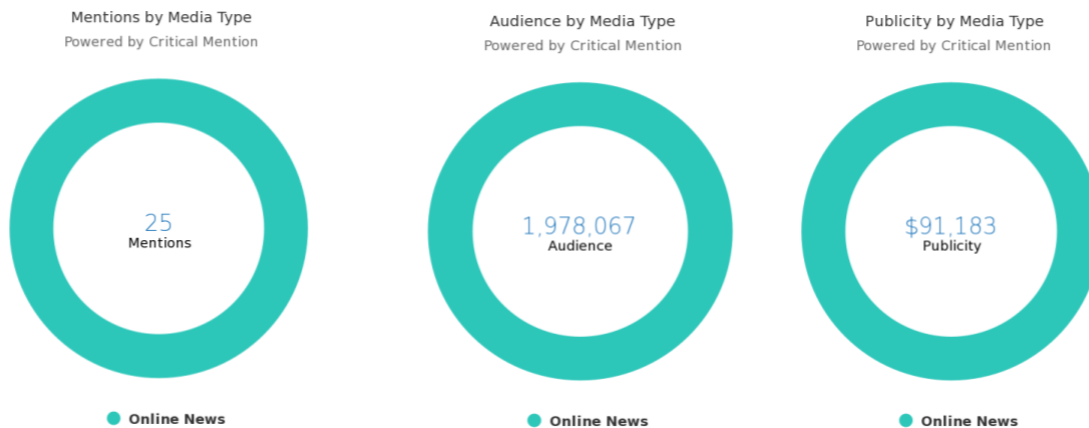
- Photos from the plaque exchange and Disney Wonder Welcome Event are here: <https://portno.canto.com/b/ODUPS>

**Posts from the Lieutenant Governor and Mayor on their social media:**



**Disney media mentions:**

We had several media outlets attend the inaugural sailing day events and post stories before and after the ship set sail. We had 25 mentions, with more than 1.9k as an audience with more than \$91k in earned media coverage that Port NOLA did not have to pay for.



**Local outlet examples:**

- [The Advocate/ NOLA.com](#)
- [New Orleans City Business](#)
- [Fox 8](#)
- [WWLTV](#)

- WWLTV did live feeds and an interview with our Communications Manager during the morning show that day in front of the Port Administration Building about the importance of Disney.

**Cruise Trade Publications:**

[Cruise Industry News](#)

[Porthole Cruise](#)

**Engagement Numbers on Port NOLA Social Media Channels:**

- **Facebook:** 29,248 reach on Facebook posts related to the Disney Wonder arrival and 3,426 people engaged with our posts.
- **Twitter:** Had 35,300 impressions during the time frame we were posting about Disney.
- **LinkedIn:** 7,961 impressions on LinkedIn and 202 people engaged with our posts.
- **Instagram:** 2,930 reach on Instagram and 230 people engaged with our posts.

- Between approximately 45- 50 employees and their children attended our movie night.
- Photos from our employee Disney event: <https://portno.canto.com/b/UMUFD>