

2013 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

(Please copy and complete this form for each entry)

Check only ONE entry classification below:

- | | | | |
|--|--------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1. AAPA Awareness Initiative Messaging | _____ | 8. Overall Campaign | _____ |
| 2. Advertisements – Single | _____ | 9. Periodicals | _____ |
| 3. Advertisements – Series | _____ | 10. Promotional/Advocacy Material | _____ |
| 4. Annual Reports | __XX__ | 11. Social/Web-Based Media | _____ |
| 5. Audio-Only Presentations | _____ | 12. Special Events | _____ |
| 6. Directories/Handbooks | _____ | 13. Videos | _____ |
| 7. Miscellaneous | _____ | 14. Visual-Only Presentations | _____ |
| | | 15. Websites | _____ |

CATEGORY 1

CATEGORY 2

Entry Title: Georgia Ports Authority FY2012 Annual Report

Port Name: Georgia Ports Authority

Port Address: P.O. Box 2406 Savannah GA, 31402

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Please indicate precisely how your port's name should be listed on any award(s) it may win:

Name: Georgia Ports Authority

Being as precise as possible, attach a separate entry statement, in English, that includes a descriptive summary of your entry and lists answers to each of the following four key questions:

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

- Describe in specific & measurable terms the situation leading up to creation of this entry.
- Analyze the major internal and external factors needing to be addressed.

2. What were your communications planning and programming components?

- Describe your overall goals (desired results).
- Describe your objectives (identify specific, measurable milestones needed to reach your goals).
- Identify your target publics (list primary, secondary and tertiary audiences in order of importance).

3. What actions were taken and what communication outputs were used?

- Explain your strategies (e.g., identify media, timing & venue choices requiring tactics to complete).
- Specify your tactics (actions used to carry out your strategies).
- Map out your implementation plan (include timelines, staffing and budget).

4. What were your your evaluation methods and communications outcomes?

- Describe formal or informal surveys, or anecdotal audience feedback, used to evaluate success.
- Determine communications outcomes by assessing changed opinions, behaviors and attitudes.

Georgia Ports Authority FY2012 Annual Report

AAPA Awards Category: Annual Report

1. What were the specific communications challenges or opportunities?

Georgia Ports Authority, owner and operator of the fourth busiest container port in the nation, is an economic engine, supporting more than 352,000 jobs throughout the state and contributing \$18.5 billion in income, \$66.9 billion in revenue and \$2.5 billion annually in state and local taxes to Georgia's economy. Our public relations goal is to communicate GPA's commercial advantages while highlighting our customer service, economic development and sustainable practices.

While the annual report conveys the GPA's financial performance, the publication also offers the opportunity to show why the ports matter to elected officials, business leaders and the public at large. Our challenge in producing the FY2012 Annual Report was to succinctly communicate:

- The national importance of Georgia's ports;
- their deep impact on the state's private economy and on government funding through taxes supported by GPA;
- the GPA's broad economic reach, touching every county in Georgia;
- the GPA's environmentally conscious methods of operation;
- and the strong argument for deepening the Savannah River channel to better accommodate larger container ships.

This required the composition and approval of letters from Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal, GPA Board Chairman Robert Jepson and GPA Executive Director Curtis Foltz. Communications staff generated articles on the economic impact of the ports, the fiscal year performance of the ports of Savannah and Brunswick, an update on the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project and articles on GPA sustainability efforts (including a piece on new electric-powered rubber-tired gantry cranes).

In addition, we expanded on a section added in the previous year. The regional economic impact profiles are now a stand-alone publication that fits into a pocket on the back cover of the FY2012 Annual Report.

2. What were your communications planning and programming components?

Our single largest objective is to win full funding for the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project. As the deepening project is planned as a state- and federally funded initiative, it is important that we maintain state support for the project as we work through federal approval and funding. The Annual Report is one facet of our argument for taxpayer investment in the deepening.

The business objective was to receive 100% of requested port-related funding and legislative requests from the 2012 Georgia Legislature including capital terminal expenditures and transportation infrastructure improvements. Target audiences included:

- State officials, including the governor and Georgia lawmakers. (The governor and state lawmakers are key to the port's success because they approve funding and legislative requests as well as transportation infrastructure efforts that directly relate to GPA's operations.)
- Local officials and port customers.
- Georgia residents.

3. What actions were taken and what communication outputs were used?

The Annual Report is issued as a print publication. In this case, an accompanying printed piece on regional economic impact slipped into a pocket on the inside back cover. GPA provided creative direction, project management, research and writing. A graphic design firm produced the layout. New and archive photos were used.

The report's release coincides with the 40-day Georgia legislative session beginning in January. It is mailed to various leaders, and hand delivered to lawmakers and the Governor's Office.

Preparation starts in October with a review of the numbers for the fiscal year just ended. Our strengths and successes are assessed. One staff writer worked with the Governor's Office to fashion an over-

arching letter contemplating the statewide logistics picture. The writer also worked with our own administrators. The board chairman's letter outlines the broad sweep of GPA policy, and the general progress in the past year. The executive director's letter gives a more detailed view of the specific performance measures that place the year in context.

This year's economic impact article relied on research completed by Dr. Jeff Humphreys, Director of the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business. Articles on the Ports of Savannah and Brunswick give a more in-depth look at physical improvements made at the terminals, and performance metrics in cargo movement. A section on the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project this year described major progress, including final federal approval.

Because major importers and shipping lines are interested in working with good stewards of the environment, we also expanded the description of our sustainability efforts. This included articles on our broader sustainability effort, and a special look at the electric rubber-tired gantry cranes (eRTGs) developed with input from GPA engineers.

We printed 10,000 copies of the main book at \$24,488. The main book featured a folder-weight cover and high-gloss interior. We printed 10,000 of the 16-page regional economic impact inserts at \$10,081. The insert was printed on the same weight paper as the interior of the main book. We mailed 5,868 copies of the complete package (\$1,142). Three photo shoots (two in Savannah and one in Brunswick) totaled \$2,325. Design work for the book, business reply card and mailing envelope cost \$8,919.

4. What were your evaluation methods and communications outcomes?

We sought input from regional PR professionals. We also used a business reply card seeking open comments, and continuum responses to three questions (strongly agree to strongly disagree):

- I found the articles to be helpful
- The report helped me to better understand the GPA's objectives
- The Georgia Ports Authority is an important economic engine for the state

Professional critiques and response cards contained positive feedback such as:

- Well and intelligently written. Vital statistics of real import included.
- I had heard about the port 'going green,' but I had no idea how substantial the savings in money and environmental waste were.
- This report clearly delineated the profound impact of our two coastal ports on the state as a whole – particularly the Metro Atlanta region.
- The subject and missions of each piece were well executed and easy to read. The text was also very clear to read and was concise and straight to the point. Furthermore, the text develops naturally from main idea through to details that make it relevant to the reader. As a PR piece, these items excel in their mission of making the face of GPA more understandable to the citizens of Savannah and surrounding areas.

OUTCOMES:

- **Business:** All 2013 legislation and funding requests were approved. In its 2013 session, the Georgia General Assembly approved \$50 million in additional funds for the harbor deepening, bringing the total state deepening dollars to \$231 million.
- **Communication:** The demand for access to the port, including requests for tours and presentations as well as our involvement in local and state events, has drastically increased from constituents throughout the state.