

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 _____ | 11. Social/Web-Based Media _____ |
| 5. Audio-Only Presentations _____ | 12. Special Events _____ |
| 6. Directories/Handbooks _____ | 13. Videos _____ |
| 7. Miscellaneous X _____ | 14. Visual-Only Presentations _____ |
| | 15. Websites _____ |

CATEGORY 1

CATEGORY 2

Entry Title: Maiden Voyage Presentation (MVP) Program

Port Name: Port of Tacoma

Port Address: P.O. Box 1837

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

Name: Port of Tacoma

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.

Port of Tacoma: Maiden Voyage Presentation (MVP) Program

Situational analysis

Early in 2012, the Port of Tacoma adopted a new strategic plan and mission: "Deliver prosperity by connecting customers, cargo and community with the world." Along with the new strategy and mission, we also formalized our internal communications efforts to increase overall employee engagement and education.

The Maiden Voyage Presentation (MVP) Program expanded our welcome efforts to an important new customer and helped connect many of our employees to that customer.

In March 2012, the Grand Alliance, a consortium of four container shipping lines—Hapag-Lloyd, NYK Line, OOCL and associated carrier ZIM—announced their vessels would start calling in Tacoma in July 2012. The announcement was big news for our Port and community. It meant more jobs and business opportunities for our area, as well as an estimated 20 to 25 percent growth in container volumes.

It also meant that more than 30 Grand Alliance ships would make their maiden voyage to Tacoma over a six-month timeframe in 2012. Like many ports, we hold a special ceremony to welcome the ship's captain and vessel on their maiden voyage. Our tradition is to go on board the ship (usually one or two senior members of our Port staff) to present the captain with a plaque. In an average year, our Port presents about 10 maiden voyage plaques.

Since each presentation takes one to two hours, some staff members thought we should limit our time and expense by honoring only the first ship call of each of the four members of the Grand Alliance instead of all of the vessels.

In discussing the issue internally, we realized that while making these presentations might be a time burden on staff members who have been doing them regularly, taking part in these presentations might be very appealing to other employees. While our employees see ships in port regularly, very few have ever had the opportunity to go on a container ship or even see the inside of a container terminal.

By developing our MVP Program around the influx of Grand Alliance maiden voyage ship visits, we were able to welcome each of the 30 vessels in our regular tradition, as well as offer a new and unique experience to many of our employees.

Target Audience

The target audience for our MVP Program was our Port employees.

Port of Tacoma: Maiden Voyage Presentation (MVP) Program

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

One of the goals of our Port's internal communications program is to increase the level of employee engagement. Port communications, external affairs and commercial strategy teams worked together to fully develop and implement the MVP Program.

The goals of the MVP Program included:

- Connecting employees with our customers and cargo (further supporting our mission)
- Giving employees a unique work experience
- Providing employees with the opportunity to interact with and share a unique experience with other employees and Port commissioners

Developing the program

Since the Grand Alliance vessels would be calling at a terminal operated by Washington United Terminals (WUT), we met with WUT officials in early June 2012 to ensure these visits could be done safely and not negatively impact any terminal operations. Both WUT and the members of the Grand Alliance were supportive of the program and provided us with safety tips needed to educate our employees prior to their visit to the terminal.

Program promotion

In mid-June 2012, we announced the MVP Program to our employees and promoted it through internal email messages, newsletters and all-employee informational meetings. Within three weeks, more than 30 employees expressed an interest in taking part in the program.

We took photos of the majority of the MVP presentations and also encouraged employees to take additional pictures on their MVP experience. These photos were used to promote the program in a variety of publications and electronic bulletin boards at the Port.

Communications

Since many employees have never been inside a container terminal, we sent all MVP participants an informational sheet and a photo book (see enclosure) so they would have a better understanding of what to expect on their MVP experience. These proved helpful in giving employees information on everything from safety tips to what types of shoes to wear when visiting the vessel.

Port of Tacoma: Maiden Voyage Presentation (MVP) Program

Results and Evaluation

Between July and October 2012, more than 35 employees participated in our MVP Program. Following their MVP experience, employees received a follow-up email and were asked to comment on their experience. Here are some of the comments from our MVP participants:

- "The captain was wonderful, warm and very accommodating. He invited us to dinner and it was fantastic."
- "Being allowed on the ship's bridge... it's not an 'every-day-experience' for most of us."
- "The captain gave me a postcard of his ship with his name and master stamp...now I have a little memento to commemorate my trip."
- "It was definitely an invaluable fun experience and well worth the two hours we spent on a Saturday morning."
- "I have never been on a ship before, so getting the tour was amazing."
- "The document that you provided us (prior to visit) was FANTASTIC! It provided great comfort to the group by setting expectations early and clearly."

In terms of cost, our MVP Program has been fairly inexpensive. The two "hard" costs are the plaques used in the MVP presentations (about \$90 each) and the two photo books (about \$30 each) we wrote and produced to help prepare employees for their MVP experience. There was also the time investment of employees who coordinated each MVP visit and the employees who volunteered to participate in an MVP visit.

In December 2012, we conducted a year-end poll and asked employees to give their thoughts on various events and highlights of the year in a variety of categories. The poll questions were open-ended in nature—not multiple choice.

Our employees named the MVP Program the winner in these two categories:

- Favorite customer connection
- Favorite Port memory

In addition, 85 percent of employees who voted in the poll named the Grand Alliance's move to Tacoma the top news story of the year.

Looking ahead

Based on the popularity of the program, we are continuing the MVP Program in 2013. We have additional employees interested in having an MVP experience, and our first MVP vessel visit will occur later this spring or summer.

We have also started another similar "customer connection" program by offering our employees group tours of the facilities and operations of companies that customers operate at our Port.

Like our MVP Program, these tours are designed to help employees get more connected to our customers and cargo as well as improving employee engagement.