

## INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSION ENTRY FORM

Please copy and complete this form for each entry.  
Create a separate document for answering the five questions below.

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 _____                       | 14. Visual-Only Presentations _____     |
|  | 15. Websites <u>1</u>                   |

Please check the appropriate box:

☒ CATEGORY 1      ☐ CATEGORY 2      ☐ CATEGORY 3

Entry Title www.portmanatee.com  
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On separate paper, **FIRST** write a short, descriptive summary of your entry, **THEN**, in as much detail as needed, specifically address each of the following five questions and number your answers. Your answers equal 50% of your score.

**1. What are/were the entry's 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. How does the communication used in this entry complement the organization's overall mission?**

- Explain the organization's overall mission and how it influenced creation of this entry.

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

- Describe your overall goals or desired results.
- Describe your objectives and list specific, measurable milestones needed to reach your goals.
- Identify your primary and secondary audiences in order of importance.

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

- Explain what strategies were developed to achieve success and why these strategies were chosen.
- Specify the tactics used (i.e., actions used to carry out your strategies).
- Detail the implementation plan by including timeline, staffing and outsourcing used.

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

- Describe any formal/ informal surveys used, or anecdotal audience feedback received, that helped in evaluating the success of this entry.
- If possible, explain how this entry influenced target audience opinions, behaviors, attitudes or actions.





## 2015 Communications Awards

### Category: Websites

[www.portmanatee.com](http://www.portmanatee.com)

The website [www.portmanatee.com](http://www.portmanatee.com) is one of the Port Manatee's main marketing tools and is used to keep target audiences up-to-date on port news and developments as well as to provide detailed information on the port. The website was modernized and upgraded in 2014 with new features and enhanced navigability in a fresh format.

#### 1. Communications Challenges and Opportunities



Port Manatee website 2009 - 2014

Among the communication challenges of [www.portmanatee.com](http://www.portmanatee.com) was to create awareness of the port by shippers, shipping lines, importers and exporters, as well as by the general public and media. The website needed to provide present and future tenants and customers with information and news on the port.

The previous Port Manatee website has been in place since 2009 and needed to be modernized and redesigned.

Multiple quick-links on the front page made navigability difficult and confusing. A bounce rate of 48.5% indicated a high percentage of visitors left the site rather than continue to view other pages, proving the website to be unappealing and impractical. Pictures were programmed in flash, which created problems for users viewing content on Apple products. Only limited content could be updated in house. Changes to the homepage, structure or lists needed to be handed to the developer resulting in extra costs.

The task was to redesign the website to improve navigation, reflect a much more modern look and to redevelop in a full content management system where port staff has the ability to make changes in all areas of the website. The new Content Management System (CMS) was to be based on well-known

technology with a broad based support system. The new website was also required to provide an optimal viewing experience on smart phones, tablets or other mobile devices through responsive web design.

## *2. Complementation of overall mission*

The mission of Port Manatee is to be a powerful catalyst of countywide economic growth and hub of trade-related activity, by developing diversified and competitive deepwater shipping facilities and conducting maritime-related activities in a profitable and environmentally responsible manner.

The Port Manatee website complements this mission by acting as an efficient and effective method of promoting business. As the first point of contact, [www.portmanatee.com](http://www.portmanatee.com) makes the port better known internationally by providing a wide range of information to the target audiences and promotes the ports strategic advantages.

## *3. Communications planning and programming components*

The goal of the enhanced Port Manatee website is to act as the primary source of information while offering easy navigability throughout the pages.

The objective was to create a better organized website by featuring single-click information access, offer enhanced search capabilities and expanded staff listings, as well as such new elements as local weather data and a Google Maps tool to help increase the ports visibility on an international level.

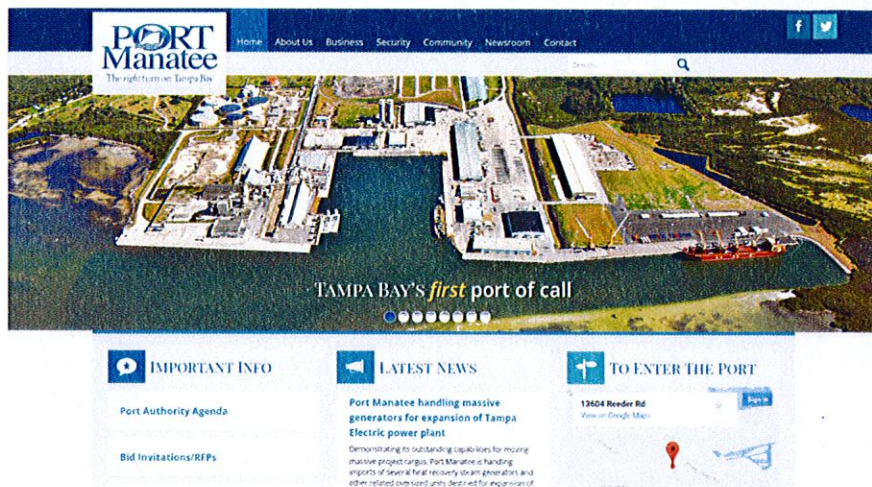
The target users of the website are port tenants as well as shipping lines, shippers, agents, importers and exporters, freight forwarders, government agencies, job seekers, general public, media and port employees.

## *4. Actions and communication outputs*

The port's website was developed, redesigned and updated by Port Manatee's communications department staff and web contractor Webtivity Marketing and Design.

In May 2014 port staff reached out to the previous web developer Webtivity to discuss the redesign of the website. Due to their experience, support and creativity Port Manatee chose them to again handle the redesign. Webtivity designed the graphics, suggested and implemented the technology and added content provided by Port Manatee's communications department. The new website was developed on the web content management system DotNetNuke based on Microsoft.NET allowing port staff full flexibility in updating content.





Port Manatee website re-designed 2014

To ensure easy access to relevant information, content was divided into seven sections. Home, About Us, Business, Security, Community, Newsroom and Contact.

Port staff created text and content and forwarded section by section to webtivity for them to fill in the website.

Navigation enhancements included integrated Google search on every page of the website as well as fast links to the most relevant information on the homepage. Additional new features are enhanced search capabilities, a Google maps tool, local weather data as well as direct links to the port's social media sites.

The new website went live December 15, 2014 and was presented to the Manatee County Port Authority Board on December 18<sup>th</sup> followed by a news release the same day.

## 5. *Evaluation Methods*

To evaluate the success of the new website, Port Manatee's communications department uses Google analytics. The stats from January 2015 to March 2015 were compared with the numbers of the same time frame in 2014:

- 9.32 % more sessions
- 3.65% more users
- 59.2 % more page views
- 45.62% more pages per session
- bounce rate reduced by 73.79 %

The numbers prove that the new website has been well accepted by the users.

The port has received much positive feedback from customers and other governmental agencies stating that information is very well arranged and easy to find. The new website tremendously enhances Port Manatee's availability to communicate and market its assets and capabilities.