

**Entry Classification: Overall Campaign
Port of New Orleans**

Port NOLA State of the Port Campaign — Opportunity Calls, We Answer



Summary: The Port of New Orleans’ annual State of The Port (SOTP) is not just an annual address, it’s a state of mind! This annual address by our President and CEO Brandy Christian has become more than an annual speech and event. It’s become a launchpad for our messaging and informs our ongoing Marketing and Communications efforts for the year. The campaign employs all elements of public affairs: marketing, media affairs, governmental affairs, community engagement, stakeholder engagement and internal communications.

The SOTP objectives and messages are delivered through all our communications tools and channels: new splash video, talking points, new Powerpoint slides, press release, website landing page, social media, etc.

Each year we have a theme that informs the entire effort and drives each piece in the same direction. In 2017 for Brandy Christian’s first SOTP as President and CEO, our theme was “Just Getting Started.” The following year was “Working for You.” In 2019, the SOTP address was themed “Opportunity Calls, We Answer” — a call to action to continue the hard work together. And all our related materials and messages aligned with that message and are used beyond the SOTP address.

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

Every year, the Port of New Orleans President and CEO delivers a State of the Port address after the fiscal year numbers are solidified, to highlight the past year’s successes and give an outlook for the future. The event is traditionally hosted by an industry partner, the International Freight Forwarders and Customs Brokers Association of New Orleans. IFFCBANO organizes and hosts the event: pays for the venue, setup, catering and registration. All the proceeds are used to benefit their scholarship fund. The port provides the content for the event and some guidance on who to invite. Because the seating was limited to 300 we wanted to play a major role in the attendee list.

The challenges: We ended up with a room full of industry people, and there as a sense of preaching to choir. It felt like a lost opportunity to extend our messaging about the value of the port to the community and policy makers. Another challenge: IFFCBANO being a nonprofit association, was limited in their staging and AV resources, so the stage was poorly lit, and the branding opportunity was limited. Also, since seating is limited to 300, we had to be strategic about who to invite. And that meant we could not invite a lot of staff, who happen to be one of our audiences in this important message.

We wanted the opportunity to create a broader more strategic communications effort that would transcend the address and the event and be more accessible to all our audiences.

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.

Development of numbers-driven, compelling content and messaging that highlights Port successes and more importantly its vision for the future is a powerful tool. Being able to package this information effectively makes an impact on the day of the event, but it also informs our marketing and communications efforts for the year. This bigger picture approach encourages us to be more strategic and deliberate about our messaging to all our audiences — within the industry and beyond.

Ultimately, when industry stakeholders have confidence in the port's ability to meet current and future demand they are more likely to strengthen their commitments to the New Orleans gateway. When the community and our policymakers recognize the Port as an economic engine creating jobs for Louisiana families, they are more likely to become ambassadors for our mission and support the Port when issues arise such as the funding of infrastructure or land-use issues for potential port development.

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

Overall Goal: The overall goal of the annual State of the Port is to deliver the port's successes, provide a vision or outlook for the future with a call to action to work together to support the Port's economic mission —delivered and packaged with numbers-driven, compelling content and imagery across all our communications channels to be used for strategic ongoing use.

Objectives:

- Employ numbers driven graphics and talking points to provide a sense of confidence in the Port's ability to meet current and future demand among industry stakeholders including shippers, carriers, tenants, terminal operators, agents, freight forwarders, cruise lines, etc.
- Include economic impact and jobs data to convey the Port's economic value to the general community, economic development partners and to elected officials so that they are more likely to become ambassadors for our mission and support the Port when issues arise such as the funding of infrastructure or land-use issues for potential port development.
- Directly address port employees before and after the event with SOTP content so they feel buy-in, ownership and pride in the port's successes and economic mission.
- Deliver a call to action - Our strategic efforts are paying off but it is critical that we continue the hard work and *seize the opportunities* together. A sense of urgency, ours to lose... Momentum, Opportunity, Action.
- Align all components and materials so that the messaging transcends the 300-person one-day event and extend the annual address into a broader messaging campaign that informs our ongoing Marketing and Communications efforts for the year.

Audiences: Because this is a broader campaign, not just for the industry, we considered all our audiences as primary: Industry stakeholders (including shippers, carriers, tenants, terminal operators, agents, freight forwarders, cruise lines, etc.), general community, economic development partners, elected officials, Port NOLA employees.

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

The process began three months out from the Sept. 11 address with the planning process. The Port's Public affairs team conducted an inventory of the Port's wins over the past year as well the big issues and challenges. This informed the theme and bigger call to action for the SOTP that informed the entire campaign and constituted the content for Brandy Christian's address. Elements include:

- Strategic invitation list
- Branded invitation
- SOTP theme and logo: “Opportunity Calls, We Answer”
- Presentation script
- Presentation Powerpoint
- “Opportunity Calls, We Answer” Splash video
- Economic development video
- Press release
- Landing page on the website with all SOTP info: release, presentation, videos.
- Employees mail marker email overview of SOTP
- Video of President and CEO’s full presentation including slides.
- Opportunity calls, We answer cookies as an event giveaway for all attendees

– Detail the entry’s implementation plan by including timeline, staffing and outsourcing used.

Port staff in the public affairs team of 7 drove the content and programming and event staffing:

- Developed a strategic invitation list including key industry partners in customers as well as local and state elected officials and economic development partners.
- Branded invitation sent two months early to save the date
- Met with Brandy and executive leadership to identify priorities and worked with the Port’s commercial team for industry-related data. Director of Marketing and Communications worked closely with VP of Public Affairs and Brandy Christian to fine tune the script.
- Outsourced a video producer to create the three videos: 1. splash video, highlighting Port success from the past year. High energy, positive to convey the port’s dynamic momentum as well as set the stage for Brandy’s address. The splash video was played before she was introduced to the podium. 2. the economic impact video to highlight value as an economic engine for Louisiana, and 3. the presentation video to post on the website for those who could not attend. Port staff provided the footage and scripts.
- Outsourced the design of the PowerPoint to a strategic communications firm to develop fresh graphics to match the ports bold direction and vision. The local firm worked closely with the Director of Marketing and Communications and the VP of Public Affairs to ensure the slides had highest impact and matched the script. We provided the talking points and the photos. This included the “Opportunity Calls” logo that was used in the branding for the event.
- Hired an outside AV team to create branded green and blue staging, lighting and sound, in order to amp up the AV to match the purposeful leadership of our President and CEO and the dynamic direction of the port.
- Steered the seating arrangements and staffed check-in and other stations during the event.
- Created a SOTP landing page with the press release, photos, videos.
- Emailed and posted a video of the complete presentation for employees who could not attend. Also, sent a letter from the CEO to employees.

Links to SOTP 2019 programming and materials:

- [SOTP website landing page](#)
- [Save the Date Invitation](#)
- [SOTP press release](#)
- [SOTP Full Presentation Video](#)
- [SOTP Splash Video](#) -“Opportunity Calls, We Answer”
- [SOTP Economic Impact Video](#)

SOTP Logo, Opportunity Calls, We Answer logo:



SOTP invitation and event giveaway cookies:

STATE OF THE PORT 2019 | PORT NOLA

SAVE THE DATE

Remarks by Brandy D. Christian
President & CEO, Port of New Orleans
CEO, New Orleans Public Belt Railroad

Hosted by International Freight Forwarders &
Customs Brokers Association of New Orleans.

Showcase your organization. Sponsorship
opportunities are available.

Online registration & sponsorship information at
www.iffcbano.org. Please RSVP by Aug. 23,
2019.

E: iffcbano@bellsouth.net • T: (504) 779-5671

Approved for one NCBFAA CCS/CES point.

September 11, 2019
11 a.m.-12 p.m.
Networking
12 p.m. Lunch and
Programming

New Orleans
Downtown Marriott
859 Convention Center
Blvd., New Orleans, LA

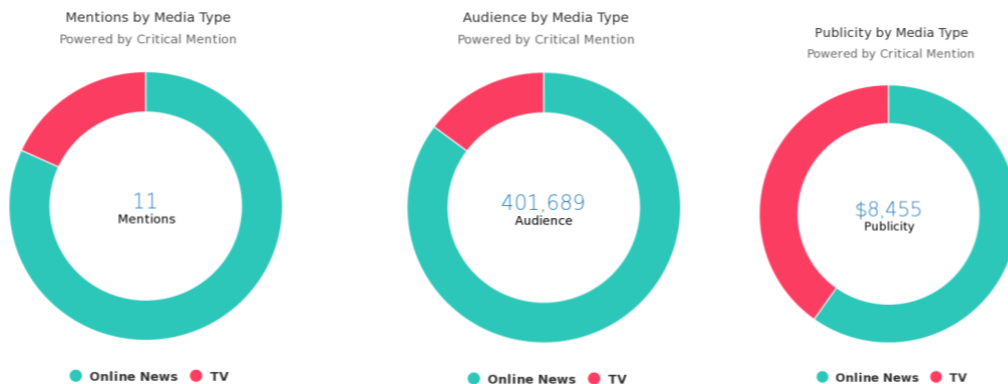


5. What were the communications outcomes from this entry and what evaluation methods were used to assess them?

Anecdotal: Internally, employees thanked us for sharing the important information with them via the email and the video. Our Commercial team immediately began using the Powerpoint graphics and videos in their business development efforts. Externally among our industry stakeholders, we had several requests to use our graphics and data from the presentation to help promote the gateway and win new business for the region. Our elected officials were happy to be included in the invitation list and mingled with their counter parts in other jurisdictions. The State of the port received wide local and industry coverage. Our Public Affairs team used the *Opportunity Calls, We Answer* messaging and materials in our efforts until we shifted our message for COVID 19 in March of 2020.

Metrics:

- SOTP press release: distributed to 628 industry and local media members, viewed on website Resulting in widespread media coverage:



- 300 industry, elected officials and community stakeholders attended the sold-out event.
- SOTP website landing page: 260 page views
- Full presentation video - 93 views on Youtube
- Splash video – 202 views on Youtube, plus 1,300 people who saw it when they attended a Port 101 between September 2019 and March 2020.
- Economic Impact Video - 391 views on Youtube
- 500 Port and New Orleans Public Belt employees received the letter from the President and CEO and the link to her full presentation.