

AAPA 2020 Communications Awards  
Port of South Louisiana  
Periodicals  
Port Log

[https://issuu.com/renaissancepublishing/docs/portlog\\_winter19](https://issuu.com/renaissancepublishing/docs/portlog_winter19)

Port Log is the Port of South Louisiana's quarterly magazine. Each issue serves as an illustration of our 54-mile district, mixing news, features and artwork to showcase the developments and culture that are important to us and our region. Our Port Log is one major element of our marketing strategy designed to engage, educate and attract our readers.

By producing a tangible piece of media, we are able to tell the stories that are most important to us outside of the digital realm, guaranteeing that our message is seen apart from the regular saturation of online news. It is a tool for staff, commissioners and partners to use to market the Port of South Louisiana.

#### 1. Challenges or Opportunities

Until 2013, the Port of South Louisiana produced one magazine, The Port Log, which was largely constituted by an annual directory. However, after contracting with Renaissance Publishing, we made the decision to move to a quarterly format. In this way, we would be able to tell more stories at an increased frequency, which added both news and follow-up value to the features contained in the magazine; with our previous annual publication format, it was essential that all writing be "evergreen," since it would not be refreshed for another year. Our publication now covers exciting developments and partnerships in the area as they unfold, along with updated and modern art direction.

Three issues a year (Spring, Summer and Fall) are dedicated exclusively to news and features, while our Winter issue supplements this material with both an alphabetical and categorical directory of our membership. The magazine is mailed to over 3,000 companies around the country, including maritime-related companies and site selectors, warehouse operators, political leaders, etc. It is also available on our website in an interactive format hosted by Issuu.com, also produced by our publisher.

The change in frequency has given us an opportunity to strengthen our brand. Even though we are the largest tonnage port in the western hemisphere, we struggle with name recognition since our port is named "Port of South Louisiana," and not affiliated by name with a location such as New Orleans or Baton Rouge. Mailing a quarterly publication to 3,000 companies, four times a year, increases familiarity with our name on a consistent basis. This has certainly helped educate people on the Port of South Louisiana.

The size of the Spring, Summer and Fall issues, which on average include 24 pages of editorial content, plus supplemental advertising could be a challenge for some. However, this has strengthened our publication as our team now focuses on which topics are most important to readers in current times. The result is a publication which is concisely written with valuable content, free of filler. It also allowed us to offer a more valuable, larger fourth quarter edition.

## 2. Mission:

The Port of South Louisiana's mission is to promote maritime commerce, trade and development and to establish public/private partnerships for the creation of intermodal terminals and industrial facilities. With Port Log, we are able to create a direct, lasting connection to existing and potential customers, and that connection is used to spread the word about what's new, interesting and relevant in the area where we live and do business. We highlight many companies located in our 54-mile, three-parish jurisdiction to display their capabilities and to promote area projects that have the potential to incite further economic development and stimulation. Each issue also includes a director's report with updated statistics and our industrial map, which illustrates every industry located in our jurisdiction as well as sites that are available for industrial development. This further supports our mission of promoting and encouraging maritime commerce.

## 3. Planning and Programming Components:

The goal of this project was to produce an informative marketing piece that would provide detailed information on the activities and undertakings in our district. Each quarterly issue is another chance to position ourselves at the forefront of the news cycle, ensuring that we engage our audience at least four times a year, as opposed to one. We also strive to create a publication that serves as both a means for communication and an everyday resource to our members and business partners.

In order to actualize our mission of creating a publication that is both a news tool and an everyday resource, our team developed a plan that is twofold: the front half of the magazine is to be weighted by relevant news, objectives and developments. With this dedicated space, we make certain that all of our assets are capitalized on, showing our total intermodal capabilities with water, road, rail and air. In this front section, we also include a community feature that is focused on the culture that surrounds the Port. It is important to us to include light reading options alongside the nuts-and-bolts of our more technical, industrial stories. The second half of our publication is resource driven; here, we include our industry map, categorical directory and alphabetical directory, which can be referenced for business leads, contact information and site selection. Anyone looking to know what life is like in and around our Port would find everything they need at the front of the book. While anyone looking for tools to engage with the Port and our partners need only flip to the back of the book.

Our audience is primarily composed of two groups: maritime companies such as shipping agents, freight forwarders, barge companies and site selectors. The publication is mailed to the second group which consists of local, state and national political leaders and various other groups and individuals. By balancing news, light features such as leisure and travel, industry information and additional resources, we hope to engage not only those in the port and maritime industry, but also leaders and citizens in our region. Commerce at the Port of South Louisiana is important to everyday life in our jurisdiction, and we hope to illustrate the effects of our work by informing people outside of this industry about the initiatives we lead and support that influence day-to-day life.

#### 4. Actions and Outputs:

While we have often employed the use of digital press releases and news circulation, the typical internet user is inundated with online media on a near-constant basis. We found that there were quantifiable superior results with direct printed media, and there is research to support this: According to the City and Regional Magazine Association, average time spent on a website is just 2 minutes, while average time spent reading a magazine is 20-25 minutes. Internet users also report that they trust printed media more than digital news, with 90% of adults reporting engagement with a printed magazine in the last six months — the highest percentage of all time. This information led us to increase our investment in print and to further our digital footprint with our magazine content. Our first strategy was to increase the frequency of our publication, to increase ad sales in the magazine for added investment for our business affiliates, and to circulate our magazines both physically and digitally to accommodate every reader's preferred format.

Our Port Log is multi-function. It is one tier of our digital marketing strategy, as we include archives of all editions on our website. It also functions as the main element of our traditional marketing strategy, as the publication is mailed to our extensive mailing list. Aside from our website, the magazine is our main method of marketing the Port and informing the stakeholders of innovation and progress.

We worked with our publisher to elect how to best package a quarterly magazine. As previously detailed, each installment features news, light reading and resources. We dedicate at least 15 pages per issues to information about new improvements within the Port, and the development/expansion of private industry in the Port district. Port Log introduces the reader to high-level officials, commissioners and plant managers, as well taking it to the opposite end of the spectrum and showing the many benefits of living in south Louisiana. The strategy to add the "Around the Port" feature, which details examples of tourism attractions, activities and the culture of our region, has allowed us to combine work and play all to appeal to non-maritime citizens and industry professionals alike.

In addition, Renaissance Publishing writes, designs and prints our Port Log to ensure quality of content and design. A member of the business development department at the Port supplies the publisher with well-thought out topics to feature in each issue, along with the company and contact names that we want interviewed. The result is professionally written content that includes sources and attributions from prominent industry officials to add authority and value to each piece. Most of the pictures, including the cover, are either Port photos or are supplied by the company the story is written about. This is all coordinated through one person at our Port. All proofing, changes and recommendations are sent to the publisher from the Port. The Port gives the final approval of all copy included in the Port Log with the exception of advertising which is paid for by each individual company.

Each magazine is produced on a three-month timeline. The first two weeks of this time are primarily dedicated to solidifying an editorial plan that covers all necessary and relevant news items; it's during this phase that we ensure the Port's focus and mission are being brought to the forefront. From that point, three weeks to a month are dedicated to the writers, who communicate with Port officials, the publisher and all necessary sources to produce the stories we want in the style we want. Once a story is turned in to the publisher, it receives a first round of editing before coming to the Port, at which point we conduct an internal review and provide necessary edits. From there, any remaining time is spent to

perfecting the layout and design of the issue; back and forth edits are conducted between the publisher and the Port before press time.

#### 5. Outcomes and Evaluations:

Data and evidence point to the success of both our print and digital campaigns. The number of advertisements in our magazine has increased by 21% since 2016, showing that businesses and organizations see the benefits that come from an affiliation with the Port of South Louisiana. By continuing to improve the quality of our magazine and the material in it, the perception of our Port will only get better, and more and more community leaders will want to establish relationships with us.

Since launching the quarterly Port Log, we have received many calls, emails, and comments from businesses in the area who want to participate in the publication. Word of mouth and hand-to-hand distribution have also led to an increased mailing list, which we update quarterly and provide to our publisher before the mailing of each issue. This means we are reaching more and more people every time we publish Port Log.

In addition, the magazine has driven more business to our publisher; they have acquired several contract projects from businesses and organizations who saw Port Log and were impressed enough to pursue their own projects. One such example is the St. John the Baptist Parish Assessor's Office, who cited our magazine as their inspiration for creating their own marketing materials with Renaissance Publishing. Our magazine has become not just an asset to us, but also to our partners, affiliates, and citizens.

By highlighting the success and prosperity of our Port and our region, we are actively stimulating engagement and growth, and we will continue to implement and build on these strategies to maximize our connection to the community.

Please see the attached link to view our publication:

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