

3. ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual reports provide a summary of an organization's major developments and management decisions during a particular year, and may include an annualized financial accounting (*optional*). **You must complete the questions on this page for each entry and include a printed copy of the annual report being submitted (for judging and display purposes) and a high-resolution electronic image (see Electronic Images for details) that best depicts it for publicity purposes. Please be brief, but use as many pages as you feel is necessary to answer the questions.**

CATEGORY 1 CATEGORY 2

Entry Title: GPA's Annual Report FY2007: Gateway to American Commerce
Port Name: Georgia Ports Authority

1) Was this entry produced in-house? by an agency? or a combination?

2) To what audience(s) was this entry targeted?

The primary audience was GPA shareholders including port customers, federal, state and local legislative officials, board of directors, community leaders throughout Georgia and other port-related decision makers. The support of state opinion leaders, such as elected and community leaders, has been critical to the GPA's success. The governor appoints the GPA's board of directors. The governor and legislators approve funding and legislative requests on behalf of the port. They also approve last-mile efforts that relate to the ports' and its customers' ultimate success. Secondary audiences include port visitors and the community who attend GPA-sponsored events or presentations.

3) What was the goal or objective for this entry and what were the key messages this entry intended to communicate to its target audience(s)?

Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) is one of the state of Georgia's strongest economic engines, according to a study conducted by the University of Georgia. The GPA's goal was to produce a report that highlights GPA's corporate achievements for FY2006 and to communicate the importance of the Georgia's deepwater ports to its stakeholders. Objectives included:

- To receive 100% of requested port-related annual funding and legislative requests from the 2008 Georgia Legislature (ie. capital terminal expenditures, last-mile transportation infrastructure improvements) through distributing GPA's year-in-review and financial data to its stakeholders.*
- To showcase GPA's corporate achievements for FY2007 through its theme, "Gateway to American Commerce" as a profitable investment, strong economic engine and global logistics gateway for the state of Georgia.*
- To report GPA's FY2007 financial data to its primary and secondary stakeholders.*
- To demonstrate GPA's commitment to preparing for tomorrow's needs today through investments in new infrastructure, equipment, technology and personnel.*
- To communicate GPA's future plans to accommodate growth to attract retail developers.*
- To create a visually stimulating piece of literature that would attract attention and "staying" power with recipients - like a coffee table book.*

4) How many printed copies or data disks (e.g., CDs) were distributed, if any? If created for the Web, how did you assess readership or "visits"?

10,000 were printed and 7,000 were mailed to the primary audience. The others are being distributed throughout the year in conjunction with GPA's statewide outreach campaign. A PDF of this publication is also available on GPA's web site: www.gaports.com.

Award of Excellence



2008 COMMUNICATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

5) How did you evaluate the success of this entry and what were the results? *(Be specific.)*

Research to develop this entry included a focus group of key regional public relations professionals and port customers, who rated the report "excellent" and provided suggestions based on the FY2006 annual report for art/copy content. These suggestions were incorporated in the FY2007 annual report with more photos and less text to concisely present the information. This focus group agreed that condensed financial statements and saddle-stitched binding (allowing it to lay flat, rather than a perfect binding used in many annual reports with full financials) were preferred to the traditional annual report format.

As a marketing tool for GPA's annual funding and legislation requests, the report's release was timed in conjunction with the 2008 General Assembly to be distributed to legislators and the governor's office. The inclusion of graphs throughout the annual report gave legislators a quick reference point during public hearings.

The primary measure of the report's success was that all 2008 legislation and funding requests were approved. Georgia's Governor Perdue said, "This report demonstrates that Georgia's deepwater ports are thriving and will continue to generate even more substantial economic impacts in future fiscal years," and described Georgia's ports as "a heart driving development and pumping commerce."

Reply cards were included in all printed FY2007 annual reports and most of the comments received (about 25) rate it as an "excellent" publication.

A survey was sent via email to 2,029 recipients of the mailed annual report. The survey also included a link to a PDF to review the annual report through GPA's web site. Almost 70 evaluations have been received (3% response rate). 42 respondents or 66% of respondents regularly read other GPA publications.

With 5 being the highest ranking, 98% ranked it a 4 or 5. Questions about overall impression, level of information, design and layout as well as photography averaged a ranking of 4.61. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 ranking strongly agree – averaged 4.37 (agree/strongly agree) on its level of detail, content and style being appropriate, its length and whether the information presented made sense.

Readers were asked the annual report's strengths (32 answered this question) which included design, layout, photography, content and descriptions like, "visually superb," "good communication," "good detail about future plans," "solid information sharing," "concise reporting of the facts."

When asked to evaluate suggestions for improvement (20 answered this question), many respondents did not recommend any ("none") and other suggestions included: "a bit more narrative," "more statistics," "more emphasis on Port of Brunswick," "more detail about port partnerships," and one response wrote: "The challenge will be keeping it as attractive and attention-getting next year as it was this year."

These evaluations will be taken into account when preparing GPA's FY2008 annual report.

6) If your Annual Report is in a language other than English, please briefly describe the major points of this entry in English.

N/A