

**13. WEB SITES**

Includes both Internet and Intranet Web sites. For judging and display purposes, include both the Web site address and printed copies of specific website pages (e.g., screen shots) you want judged/displayed. *You must complete the questions on this page for each entry and include 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

URL (Website Address): www.portsofindiana.com

Port Name: Ports of Indiana

1) Was the site designed in-house?  by an agency?  or a combination?

2) Is the site maintained by in-house staff?  by an outside agency?  or a combination?

3) To what audience(s) is the site targeted?

The main target audience for our website includes current port tenants and customers, prospective customers that are looking to locate at or use our ports, the media, state officials and government, and our three port communities' leadership and economic development partners. As a secondary focus, it is also geared toward the general public and those without any previous contact or knowledge of the Ports of Indiana.

4) Describe the objective of the website. What features and information are used to support the objective?

The objective of the website is to serve as the primary "portal" or entry point for our entire Ports of Indiana system. It is the main marketing piece that brings our very diverse and expansive system of ports all together for public view under one brand and one corporate structure. Because we have three port facilities that are as much as a 6-hour drive apart and our Corporate Headquarters is in downtown Indianapolis (at least 2 hours from water in all directions), it is impossible for anyone to literally stand on a dock and really see all of our port operations. In fact, most of Indiana's businesses and population are not located near water, so the website is even more important because it is the only place they can really see what we do. Because of the distance between and diversity of our ports, we use the website to "bring it all together" and show our target audiences how each individual port component is part of a much bigger and more powerful network that stretches across the entire state of Indiana. Our tag line: 3 ports, 2 waterways, 1 system really articulates this and is prominently displayed on the page as a count to 'something big.'

Since we have limited time, staff and resources to commit to the website, it's important for the site to have a fresh, "always new" look to it without requiring daily maintenance from us. To do this we have incorporated several animation features that change automatically or with every visit or refresh of the homepage: moving maps, masthead pictures, changing graphics. We have also incorporated unique, customizable maps that allow visitors to get a quick birds-eye view of our ports and the key areas that meet their needs: available lands, current port companies, road/rail access, directions, etc. Having easy to use click-on or toggle over maps on the home page is

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important for our users to quickly see and learn where are ports are and how our unique system is set up – plus the maps are just fun to play with, which adds to their value tremendously!

On our home page, the changing news stories are the main focus. They allow us to show that there is a lot going on at our facilities without having to do daily updates, which would be impossible with our limited staff. This gives the target audiences, especially media, a quick snapshot of what's important and where they should go to get more info. Obviously this always includes a photo to draw more attention to it as the main feature on the home page.

As a port system, we measure our success by the success of the companies doing business at our ports, so it was important for us to include "customer perspectives" from some of our tenants as to why they chose to do business at the Ports of Indiana. That section on the homepage titled "Why the Ports of Indiana?" has been extremely well received by our customers as it also markets their business and provides a link to all our port companies at multiple locations – but more importantly it also shows each business as part of something bigger. It shows these businesses are all part of a port system with many great companies that have similar interests and many synergies in operations. It ties companies together that may not have every encountered each other otherwise and creates the opportunity for additional business partnerships. Our best business attraction efforts are carried out by building on the synergies of our current customers. We grow our business by helping them grow theirs.

The "Meet Captain Cargo" cartoon was added to our home page as a fun way to tell "our story" in a short (4 min), easily digestible format that could appeal to a younger audience, but was really designed for adults who are not at all familiar with our ports or ports in general (government, community leaders, businesses that don't currently ship by water, general public). While admittedly not quite on par with the popular TV shows "Family Guy," "American Dad" or "The Simpsons," our own Captain Cargo pulls from that popular genre and does allow us to have fun marketing our ports in an unusual way that has gotten a great reaction from many people. In fact, the leaders from the American Great Lakes Ports Association and the National Waterways Council both sent us glowing, unsolicited congratulations on the final piece right after they got our email announcement, saying it was a perfect way to communicate to their congressional audiences.

Our website is divided into four main sections: a Ports of Indiana overview, the Newsroom, section, Business & Services and Key Topics. Links to almost every page are available on the left side menu or as a drop-down selection throughout the entire website. Overall the website's basic purpose is to inform users about Ports of Indiana news and give a comprehensive description of the organization and its various functions. The site is designed to portray the Ports of Indiana as a dynamic, resourceful organization, which we try to convey with unique features such as the humorous cartoon and the interactive map features. The home page displays the most recent news while providing an extensive menu (accessible from all pages) of links to descriptions of every significant aspect and function of our organization. Our goal is to market our port resources and our tenant companies, which we do through substantial background information, numerous maps, printable brochures as well as tenant testimonials and contact info.

- 5) How do you promote your website? *URL is required to be posted on all materials disseminating from the organization, including emails, letters, promotional items, publications, press releases and presentations*
- 6) Is there a password-protected area that the judges can view? If yes, what is the password? *NO*

7) How did you evaluate the success of this entry?

- # of "visits"
- Business opportunities gained
- Audience feedback
- Time/money saved by providing material electronically
- Other (*please explain*)

We evaluate the success of the site through numerous areas. The main "web hits" analytics we measure are Visits, Visitors, Average Visits per Day, Average Visit Duration, Median Visit Duration, Average Page Views per Day, Average Page Views per Visit, International Visits, Visits from United States, and Total Page Views. The ebb and flow of our site traffic closely mirrors the volume of our news coverage and press release dissemination. We have seen tremendous increases in all categories over the last four years – when comparing 2004 vs. 2007, there were huge increases in Visits (+46%), Visitors (+37%), Average Visit Duration (+59%) and Total Page Views (+65% – up from 49,581 to 143,296).

We also survey customers on a regular basis to verify their information on our site and ask for their input about current and future site features as well as new business contacts referred by the site. Based on these discussions, we have made ongoing changes to the site and added several new features. Based on this feedback, we identified a need for some tenants to have their own company webpage based on our site. We have worked with them to design a simple page of contact information and service descriptions that we maintain for them at no charge, and they then can use that to market their business (which also markets our site as well). This has been a big help to the smaller tenant companies and now others are eager participate as well, so are we are planning to add pages for all tenants in the near future.

We have also significantly reduced printing costs for our main marketing brochures (were \$10,000 per year) by posting them as PDFs online. We still have some print costs for the brochures but they are not on an annual basis and there is no delivery cost with our ports and potential customers accessing the online versions.

8) If your Web site submission is in a language other than English, please briefly describe the major points of this entry in English. *ENGLISH ONLY*