AAPA 2020 Communications Award Program
Port of New Orleans
Entry Classification: Overall Campaign

Entry Title: Maritime Month 2019

Summary - Port NOLA Maritime Month and Maritime Day Campaign 2019
The Port of New Orleans celebrated Maritime Month throughout May and National Maritime Day May 22, recognizing the value of maritime commerce in the region and paying tribute to the region’s rich maritime history, through an integrated, multi-channel outreach campaign. For the past few years, we’ve extended the Maritime Day message into a month-long public awareness campaign about the value of the Port and the maritime industry, and to celebrate the hardworking men and women who make it work. We do that through a month full of events, partnerships, promotions, original content.

This is an integrated multilateral effort using all our available communications channels to promote our messages — advertising, press releases, promotions, events, tours, panels, and website and social media posts. We leverage partnership to extend our message -- collaborate with the media and our stakeholders on several events to strengthen our reach. Our annual campaign has become an anticipated event among our partners in the industry, the community, our employees and the media.

1. What are/were the entry’s specific communications challenges or opportunities?
The Port of New Orleans is a major economic engine in the city and state, yet the general public does not immediately equate jobs and the economy with the Port. We also have a physical barrier: a miles-long flood wall that separates much of the riverfront cargo and cruise activity from the neighboring residences and businesses. Leaving people to wonder: what goes on beyond the flood wall?

In the past, we had observed May 22 National Maritime Day with social media posts and the occasional op-ed. Since 2017, the Port NOLA Public Affairs team has seized on the opportunity each year to extend that Maritime Day message throughout the month of May to raise public awareness about the value of the Port and our importance to the community. Having a third annual Maritime Month was our opportunity to build on our efforts from the inaugural year and grow that seed of awareness and support that was planted in the minds of our audiences the previous year.

Additionally, our employees are among the hard-working people we are honoring with Maritime Month, but we weren’t connecting the dots and communicating that as clearly as we could have in the past. We realized we were missing a huge opportunity to connect with our own employees. This year we wanted to take the opportunity to message to employees that they are vital to the port’s economic mission, and the work they do every day contributes to that common cause of creating jobs for Louisiana families. It’s become an event that the public and our partners look forward to.

2. How does the communication used in this entry complement 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. 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: Celebrate the hardworking men and women who make New Orleans’ maritime industry a success and educate the general public about the value the Port of New Orleans, the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad and maritime activity bring to the community -- through media outreach, advertising, promotions, events, and web and social media outreach.

Clear Objectives:
• Extend that Maritime Day message throughout the month of May to raise public awareness about the value of the Port and our importance to the community.
• Build on our efforts from the inaugural year and grow that seed of awareness and support that was planted in the minds of our audiences the previous year.
• Connect with our employees to let them know they are vital to the port’s economic mission, and the work they do every day contributes to this vital industry and our common cause of creating jobs for Louisiana families.

Our Key Messages:
• The hardworking men and women of the Port and related businesses play a significant role in the growth and success of New Orleans and the region, and we value their role in supporting our economic mission.
• Port NOLA and NOPB employees are important to Port NOLA’s mission to drive the economy for our jurisdiction, state and region, and the work they do every day contributes to that common cause of creating jobs for Louisiana families.
• Port NOLA activity generates jobs at every skill level and millions of dollars in economic impact.
• Our region’s youth have opportunities for family-supporting maritime careers that exist right here in their own backyard.
• The Port and NOPB are committed to operating sustainably.

Our Audience:
• Primary: Port employees, general public, non-maritime partners, and policymakers
• Secondary: Port NOLA maritime stakeholders and tenants

4. What actions were taken and what communications outputs were employed in this entry?
We sought to leverage partnerships and all the communications tools at our access to extend our efforts. We built on our partnership with the No. 1 morning news show in the region, WWL-TV Morning News. We did most of the content creation in-house except for the advertising spots and news broadcast produced by our media partner WWL-TV. For the news coverage we pitched port stories to the news team that viewers would find compelling and informative.

Timeframe: May 1 – 31, 2019
Concept: Your Working River – Port NOLA Maritime Month 2019

Tools:
• WWL-TV Morning Show Broadcast Wednesday, May 22: pre-taped and live interviews
• Press Releases: Maritime Month release and certain Maritime Month events/initiatives
• Talking Points for May speaking engagements and TV interviews
• Website: breaking news item and splash page on portnola.com
• Social Media graphics/memes for Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, dedicated hashtags: #PortNOLAMaritimeMonth #YourWorkingRiver #YourPortYourNOLA  #PortNolaGateway
• Fact sheets
• Graphics for digital platforms
• Stakeholder outreach emails
• Employee outreach emails
• Social media contest for employees and the public
• Special promotional sunglasses for employees and public
• Photos: stock and live shots and video to send to media and post per event
• Videos: People, Community, Just Getting Started, Cruise NOLA
• WWL-TV :30 and :15 spots throughout the month
• WWL-TV web banners, social posts

Actions:
• Website – A splash page was created at portnola.com with an intro explaining Maritime Month/Day, a list of events and links to watch the video, press release, link to WWLTV.com.

• WWL-TV Paid ads—Throughout the month, the station ran banner ads on their website, ran :30 ad spots on TV, distributed information via social media, did an interview and aired segment during their Great Day Louisiana program and pre-produced footage to run during Maritime Day broadcast.

• WWL-TV Morning News Show: Broadcast held 6-9 am Wednesday, May 22 on location at the Port NOLA admin building with a view of the river and bridge, with live remote on the Fireboat.

• Press Releases – one launched Maritime Month on May 2. A media advisory to announce STEM NOLA Day at the Port.

• Constant Contact email distribution – One to launch Maritime Month distributed to the various stakeholder groups. One for the launch press release and one for STEM NOLA Day.

• Social Media Plan – Maritime Month was the subject of multiple posts on all social media channels Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Main themes: Economic Impact, Cargo Connections, Cruise NOLA, Environmental Leadership, Employee and Public Engagement. Posts included branded Maritime Month memes, port fun facts, links, hashtags, live and pre-produced video, etc. Posts also were original content generated by the public as well as employees to share and capture images of #yourworkingriver in action. We also gave top employee posts and public posts Port NOLA swag as giveaways.

• Employee Engagement Flyer

Calendar of Events:
April 25 – Maritime Month/Day Board Resolution
May 9 – City Proclamation of Maritime Month/Day and the industry’s value
May 7 – National Travel & Tourism Week – Pep Rally at Champions Square
May 12-18 - Harbor Police Appreciation/National Police Week
May 14 - New Orleans Public Belt utility box art reveal
May 18 – STEM NOLA Working River Day
May 22 – Live broadcast WWLTV morning news aboard Gen. Kelley
May 22 – Global Maritime Ministries Port Employee Appreciation Lunch
May 23 - New Orleans Public Belt Procurement Day
May 24 - Public Port Tour – the monthly public Port tour on the Gen. Kelley
View the promotional video here: [WWL-TV 30-Second Promo](#)

View the on-air interviews here:

- [Kicking off Maritime Day with Brandy D. Christian, Port NOLA CEO](#)
- [How Giant New Cranes are Helping Port NOLA Meet Growing Demand](#)
- [Big River Coalition Director on Mississippi River Ship Channel Dredging Work](#)
- [Cruise Ship Industry's Growing Impact on Port NOLA](#)
- [Port NOLA's Sustainable Development Efforts](#)
- [Port NOLA's Economic Impact for Small Businesses](#)
- [Great Day Louisiana’s segment during National Police Week](#)

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

**Anecdotal:** The feedback was overwhelmingly positive across all our audiences and outreach channels. Our industry stakeholders were happy to participate and have asked be involved again. Members of the community were appreciative and enthusiastic about going “behind the flood wall” for the tour.

We plan to build on the success of Port NOLA Maritime Month effort and based on these metrics and other positive audience feedback, not only will people start to see Port NOLA as a great asset to the community, they will also look forward to future Maritime Month engagement.

**Measurables:**

- **WWL-TV Partnership - paid partnership ($21,000)**
  - 136 x :30 spots: 845,598 Net Reach A18+. The TV Schedule delivered 1,945,000 A18+ impressions.
  - Co-branded Facebook page: 112,023 people reached
  - WWLTV.com banner ads: 300,066 impressions delivered, 118 clicks
  - 2x- Home Page Push Down on WWLTV.com, 43,818 impressions delivered, 86 clicks
  - Pre-roll on WWLTV.com had 82 clicks and 40,298 impressions delivered.
- **WWL-TV Partnership – Earned News component**
  - Six on-air interviews with a duration of 3-4 minutes each: Reached 36,700 A18+ during the first hour of the morning newscast alone.
  - Great Day Louisiana interview with a duration of 5 minutes reached 20,303 A18+ and 19,400 households.
- **Total Earned Media:** The 2019 Maritime Month campaign reached approximately 430,437 online news visitors with a total online news publicity value of $47,983.
Screenshots from Live Broadcast:

STEM NOLA Day for Local Students:

- We had more than 200 local students participate in our STEM Saturday event at Port NOLA to learn about the working Mississippi River.
- STEM NOLA/Port Saturday video: [https://portno.canto.com/b/LKERE](https://portno.canto.com/b/LKERE)
- STEM NOLA Saturday photos: [https://portno.canto.com/b/SJRFA](https://portno.canto.com/b/SJRFA)
WWLTV Promoted Posts:

Examples from Public Social Media Contest:

Resilient NOLA @resilientNOLA · May 15, 2019
Did you @PortNOLA is a member of @GreenMarine, the #GreenMarine certification program for #environmentalperformance & #sustainableoperations? Thx @NewOrleansBA for the tour! #portnolamonth #portnolagateway #yourworkingriver

Employee Social Engagement:
Employee Participation:

Employee group photo with sunglasses as our Team giveaway.

Port NOLA website/social media metrics:

- More than 150 unique visits to the Maritime Month landing page during the month of May.
- Over 20,000 impressions on Port NOLA social media posts on Facebook alone during Maritime Month.
Twitter:

- Instagram had 369 likes and 4,281 reach on all posts during Maritime Month. Our LinkedIn page also had engagement with our outside audiences.