Using Research to Inform Communications & Marketing Strategies

AAPA Communications and Marketing Seminar
Montreal, QC, Canada

Monday, Oct. 28, 2019
Presenters

Ellen Kennedy – Moderator
Asst. Director, Business Development/Communications
Port Everglades
Fort Lauderdale, FL, USA

Bethany Welch – Panelist
Senior Manager, Communications & Business Outreach
North Carolina Ports
Wilmington, NC, USA

Lauren McCormick – Panelist
Public Affairs Manager
Port Freeport
Freeport, TX, USA

Marilyn Sandifur – Panelist
Spokesperson & Media/PR Specialist
Port of Oakland
Oakland, CA, USA
S.M.A.R.T. Objectives & Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable/Attainable**
- **Realistic**
- **Time-bound**

**KPIs** - Where does your organization want to go?
- Higher Revenue or Volume
- More Members or Customers
- Greater Satisfaction
Measured results earn PR a seat at the table.

Non-traditional measurements:

• How often your company is mentioned alongside key themes. – PR Daily

• The tone of the articles and/or social media activity regarding your company. – PR Daily

• Word-of-mouth is the primary driver of nearly 50% of purchases – PRWeek
Project Summary

Our Ports. Their Stories. video campaign features three short videos aimed at highlighting key organizational goals – infrastructure improvements (long-term vision), efficiency and customer service.

**Vision** focuses on NC Ports’ $200 million capital improvements plan. Throughout the video, partners and customers discuss the importance of the investments the organization is making to modernize the Port of Wilmington.

**Efficiency** highlights the first-in-class landside and waterside efficiencies at NC Ports’ marine terminals. In this video, customers discuss the importance of the organization’s efficiencies and how that impacts their business decisions.

**Partnership** features NC Ports’ commitment to customer service. It is part of the organization’s mission to uphold the highest level of customer service.
Our Ports. Their Stories.

**Campaign Details**

The video campaign is an expanded marketing and advertising initiative aimed at highlighting three organizational objectives – infrastructure improvements (long-term vision), efficiency and customer service.

**Goal**

To attract new business to North Carolina’s ports, educate existing customers on operational changes and improvements as well as educate the North Carolina community on NC Ports’ business and long-term plans.

**Execution**

Utilize existing advertising contracts with international trade publications, a designated landing page on [ncports.com](http://ncports.com), social media and Business Development team outreach with customers.
Project Opportunities & Challenges

**Opportunities**
- Highlight NC Ports’ $200 million capital improvements plan.
- Discuss terminal changes and impacts.
- Market capabilities like fast truck turn around times and vessel productivity.
- Support claims of growth, investment, efficiency and customer service.
- Offer first-hand customer experience.

**Challenges**
- Ensure existing customers and future customers know we can deliver on our promises.
- Ensure message of growth, investment, efficiency and customer service wasn’t getting lost because of proximity of competitors.
Planning and Programming

**Project timeline**

**October 2018**
Determine concept and goals of each video and customers to be interviewed

**November 2018**
Draft a creative brief and storyboard for each video and finalize filming and interview schedules

**December 2018**
Filming and interviews conducted

**January 2019**
Video editing, graphic design and website landing page developed

**February 2019**
Final approval by North Carolina Ports Communications team

**March 2019**
Launch of videos on landing page, social media and first round of eblasts

**April – June 2019**
Second, third and fourth round of eblasts

**Primary audience**
Beneficial cargo owners
Ocean carriers
Customers
Maritime service partners

**Secondary audience**
Local, regional and state leaders
Local, regional and state communities

---

**CAPTAIN GLENN TURBEVILLE**
General Manager and VP, McAllister Towing
McAllister is celebrating 150 years in marine transportation.

**NICK PERKINS**
Plant Manager, ACME Smoked Fish
A major purveyor of smoked fish to the finest establishments.

**GARY WINSTEAD**
President and CEO of A.R.C. Transit
Serving importers and exporters throughout the U.S.

**CAPTAIN SCOTT ALDRIDGE**
River Pilot, Cape Fear River Pilots
Navigating the world to the Port of Wilmington.

**FELIPE ESPINOSA**
Director of Manufacturing, ACME Smoked Fish
A major purveyor of smoked fish to the finest establishments.

**SAM DUGGINS**
Owner-operator leased to A.R.C. Transit
Serving importers and exporters throughout the U.S.
Objectives and Milestones

- Send eblasts utilizing existing advertising contracts with international trade publications.
- Drive traffic to the designated *Our Ports. Their Stories.* landing page on the NC Ports website via eblasts and social media posts.
- Generate calls and inquiries to the North Carolina Ports Business Development team for potential new business.
- Generate likes, comments, shares and other interactions across all social media platforms.
Outcomes and Evaluation

**Website metrics**
- *Our Ports. Their Stories.* Landing page netted over 1,700 video views
- Site sessions were up 16% compared to February
- The most viewed video was *Their Views. Our Vision.*

**Media Metrics**
- Trade publication eblasts drove 256 site sessions, 949 video views and 49,091 impressions.

**Social media metrics**
**Facebook**
- Reach – 8,847
- Engagements – 1,258

**LinkedIn**
- Impressions – 15,376
- Video views – 8,154

**Twitter**
- Impressions – 4,100
- Engagements – 104

BIG NEWS: North Carolina Ports is expanding its capabilities to handle more cargo while maintaining the efficiencies our customers expect. Thanks to our $200 million capital improvements plan, NC Ports is expanding its turning basin, doubling its container capacity, tripling on-terminal refrigerated plugs and installing a third neo-Panamax crane. It’s one thing to hear it from us, now hear from our customers and partners on how these projects are impacting their businesses today and tomorrow!

Learn more about our improvements and hear other customer stories on our website: [https://ncports.com/port-improvements/customer-stories...](https://ncports.com/port-improvements/customer-stories...)

#ncports #portofwilmington #portofprogress #bigshipready

---

Social media metrics

**Facebook**
- Reach – 8,847
- Engagements – 1,258

**LinkedIn**
- Impressions – 15,376
- Video views – 8,154

**Twitter**
- Impressions – 4,100
- Engagements – 104

BIG NEWS: North Carolina Ports is expanding its capabilities to handle more cargo while maintaining the efficiencies our customers expect. Thanks to our $200 million capital improvements plan, NC Ports is expanding its turning basin, doubling its container capacity, tripling on-terminal refrigerated plugs and installing a third neo-Panamax crane. It’s one thing to hear it from us, now hear from our customers and partners on how these projects are impacting their businesses today and tomorrow!

Learn more about our improvements and hear other customer stories on our website: [https://ncports.com/port-improvements/customer-stories...](https://ncports.com/port-improvements/customer-stories...)

#ncports #portofwilmington #portofprogress #bigshipready
Our Ports. Their Stories.

Learn more about the video campaign and why customers choose North Carolina Ports by visiting the Customer Stories [website](#). You can watch all three videos by clicking on the icons below.
NORTH CAROLINA PORTS
Bigger, Deeper, Wider
Strategic initiatives supporting Port’s Vision:

- Freeport Harbor Channel deepening and widening
- Buildout of the Port’s Container Handling Facilities
- Development of rail-served warehousing and distribution facilities
- Supporting development of a rail and highway transportation corridor from Freeport to Rosenberg
Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project

- Deepens the channel
  - Current depth – 46 feet
  - Project depth – 51-56 feet

Port Freeport will be the Deepest Port in Texas
Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project

Federal cost-shared project authorized by Congress in 2014

More than half of the Channel Project is expected to be paid with federal funds

Total Cost to Construct $295 Million

U.S. Army Corp of Engineers $165 million

Port Freeport $130 million
Local Election – May 5, 2018

Port Freeport – Proposition A

☐ FOR  "THE ISSUANCE OF $130,000,000 OF BONDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING, CONSTRUCTING, OR DEVELOPING THE FREEPORT HARBOR CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, AND THE LEVYING OF THE TAX IN PAYMENT THEREOF"

☐ AGAINST

As a government entity, Port Freeport must have voter approval to issue bonds for capital improvement projects.
Goal

Inform community of importance of:

- Port
- Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project
- 2018 Bond Package

Plan

- Press releases
- Micro-website
- Printed informational materials
- Community presentations
- Media coverage
- Brand ambassadors
Target Audience

- Covers 87% of county (roughly 1,100 sq. miles)
- Diverse audiences
  - Residents/Voters
    - Over 15 cities/villages within the district
  - Industry
  - State and federal stakeholders
  - Port partners
  - Surrounding communities
Research and Analysis

- Demographics
  - Voting records

- Key issues of importance for identified segments
  - Engagement with civic, educational, and political organizations
  - Personal conversations
Challenges

- Cost to do research
  - Surveys

- Time frame

- Restrictions regarding “campaigning”

- Misinformation

- Opposition
  - Focus on the supporters, instead of combatting the opposition
Key Campaign Components

- Printed materials
  - Short and simple fact cards
- Community presentations
  - Covered the district
  - Tailored to audience
- FAQ section
  - Working document
  - On the website
  - Eliminated responding to multiple inquiries
- Brand ambassadors
  - Staff
  - Commissioners
  - Community leaders
Bond Package Approved by Voters
May 2018

Port Freeport – Proposition A

☑ FOR
☐ AGAINST

"THE ISSUANCE OF $130,000,000 OF BONDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING, CONSTRUCTING, OR DEVELOPING THE FREEPORT HARBOR CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, AND THE LEVYING OF THE TAX IN PAYMENT THEREOF"
Communications Seminar
Growing our Business campaign
Outcomes and Measurement
The Port of Oakland’s mission is to be fiscally sound and grow its business for the benefit of customers, employees and the communities it serves.
Port’s three lines of business

- Aviation
- Commercial Real Estate
- Maritime
Expanding cargo volume

- North America ports compete for business
- Global trade growth moderates to single digits
- A trade war threatens growth
Strategic Plan Growth
Drivers for Growth

- Significant investment
- Transformed operations
- New logistics capabilities
Communications Program

- Print
- Electronic
- Social Media
- Face-to-face meetings
Port of Oakland key message points

- Investor faith in Oakland is building an unrivaled growth platform
- Oakland has never been in a stronger position
Outcomes

• Positive perceptions
• Influenced desired stakeholder behaviors
• Business and industry leaders reacted favorably
• Third party advocates praised Oakland’s progress
Increased communication volume

- 12 press releases a month vs 10.5 prior year
- Average 5.7 stories, per day, seven days a week, about Port of Oakland in traditional media vs 4 in prior year
- Average three videos per month, up from one a month in prior year
- Social media posts per month up 3.5 percent; increased Port of Oakland Facebook followers by 17 percent
- 2,474 LiveChats, up 5 percent from prior year
Record cargo

- 2.55 million TEUs
- 5.2 percent growth
Metric

Shaping perceptions

- Negative Port of Oakland social media perceptions - down 3%
- Positive Port perceptions in traditional media 71% percent (target 70%)
- Negative Port perception in traditional media steady at 11%
Publicly expressed perceptions of key 3\textsuperscript{rd} party influencers

- “Oakland is the best productivity port on the coast.”
  - Ed DeNike, President SSA Containers

- “What sets Oakland apart from competitors is its close-knit network of stakeholders including shippers, labor, freight forwarders and carriers.”
  - Kevin Bulger, Apex Maritime
Publicly expressed perceptions of key 3rd party influencers

- “Oakland is growing strongly and I’d like find out more about it.” – Paul Avery, Editor, World Cargo News

- “Oakland is now focusing on developments within the harbor footprint, that will improve efficiency and differentiate it from other U.S. ports.” – Colliers

- “Oakland has an inherent, solid base in being the natural outlet for the huge volume of farming exports from California’s Central Valley.” – Port Strategy magazine
Media

- Message from the Maritime Director
- The Seaport Logistics Complex Story
- Jobs Agreement
- Seaport Logistics Complex History and Timeline
- Video and Image Gallery
- Related businesses and contacts

- Press releases
- Social Media
- Videos
- Newsletters
- Website
- Microsites
- Intranet Port360

CenterPoint

CenterPoint LANDING
AT OAKLAND SEAPORT
OFFICIAL WEBSITE
It’s our job as PR pros to take this bounty of data and use it to tell a captivating story.

– PRWeek