

AAPA 2023 Communications Award Program Port of Vancouver USA

Entry title: Port of Vancouver USA Internship Socials
Entry classification: Social/Web-based Media

Summary

In 2022, The Port of Vancouver USA embarked on a journey to build a maritime-focused internship program. In our inaugural year, the port hosted two interns, Briana and Cole, who spent several weeks of their summer learning how the port operates and familiarizing themselves with various aspects of maritime trade. The port's External Affairs team collected photos from the interns each week and created social media posts titled, "Friday Follow Up with the Interns." This social media campaign was created to both educate the community about a facet of port operations and to build awareness of the internship program to help with future recruitment.

Each week featured new photos and graphics with the same "Friday Follow Up..." tagline. It was a fun and approachable campaign that allowed the community to see a different and more personal side of the port while building awareness of the port and internship opportunities available.



1. Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges:

- Giving a good summary of the interns' activities each week while trying to keep word counts low so people could digest it quickly while scrolling
- Creating eye-catching graphics to reach the audience and get them to stop scrolling and read the update
- Creating copy that was both an authentic reflection of the individual interns' personalities while mapping back to the port's core operations and internship's purpose
- Showcasing various port operations while being mindful of the proprietary nature of some activities

Opportunities:

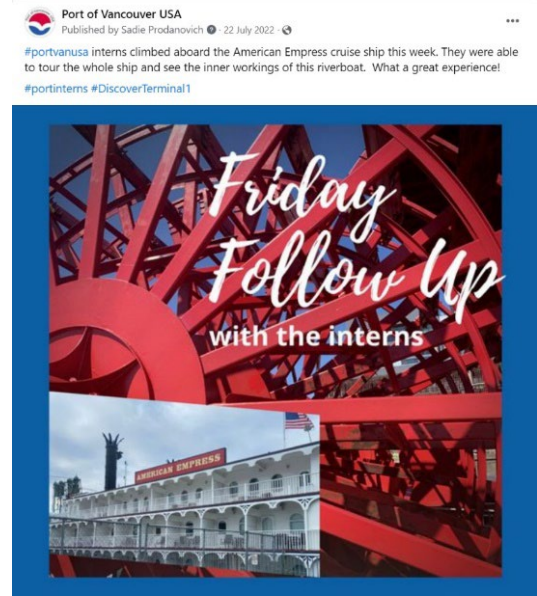
- Showing the community a more personal side of port operations
- Building awareness of the port's internship program
- Increasing engagement on the port's social media platforms
- Building understanding of the importance of maritime jobs

2. Incorporation of mission

The Port of Vancouver USA's mission is to provide economic benefit to its community through leadership, stewardship, and partnership in marine, industrial and waterfront development.

We would not be able to fulfill this mission without our skilled workforce; without our strategic location on the Columbia River at the confluence of road, river and rail; or without the support of the community.

The Friday Follow Up campaign allowed the port to showcase its commitment to this mission through the education of future maritime workers. The hope is that these individuals with specialized and sought-after maritime training would pursue a future career with a port in the Northwest U.S. By building awareness of the program through social media, the port can reach potential interns in maritime academies across the country.



3. Planning and programming components

Goal: The goal of the Friday Follow Up with the Interns campaign was twofold; to show a more personal and approachable side of the port to the community, and to build awareness of the internship program with maritime academies around the country.

Objectives:

- Post weekly follow ups with the interns each Friday of their internship
- Consistently use relevant hashtags to connect the campaign:
#summerinternship #portvanusa
#vancouverwashington #marineinternship
#internship #maritime
- Create eye-catching graphics with lots of photos and connecting tagline



Target Audience:

- Community members who follow the port on social media
- Potential interns attending maritime academies
- Business and industry partners who worked with the interns

4. Planning and programming components

Since activities for the interns varied week-to-week, the graphics changed significantly with each post depending on the number of photos to include. The interns were responsible for providing photos and a description of their activities each Thursday to the Social Media Specialist who then created the graphic and post on Friday.

Each post began with the most important element...photos. The External Affairs department used those photos along with crafted copy to paint a picture of the interns' activities each week.

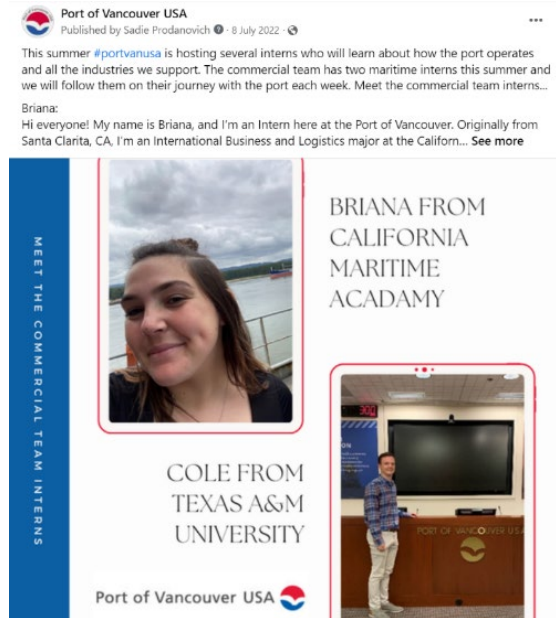
Timeline:

- July 2022: Internships start. An introductory post is created to kick off the campaign
- Weekly July-August: Friday Follow Up with the Interns posts are posted weekly

5. Actions and communications outputs

This campaign played to the strengths of the interns—mainly the preference for people their age to be engaged on social media. Both Cole and Briana embraced the campaign – sharing posts with their schools, followers, family and friends. Both also had LinkedIn profiles where they could share the posts and their experiences with potential employers. Photos of the interns onboard a bar pilot helicopter, exploring Pacific Northwest waterfalls and places of interest, and watching at the controls of a tugboat got tremendous engagement. It only made sense to promote the intern program and these dynamic individuals on social platforms where our target audiences spend significant time.

Objective: Surpass 10,000 impressions and 5% engagement rate on social media.



Result: The campaign had an impression reach of 10,655 and engagement rate of 5.5%.

Facebook:

- 5,498 impressions
- 296 engagements

LinkedIn:

- 4,188 impressions
- 245 clicks to website

Instagram:

- 969 impressions
- 42 engagements

