

Port Log is the Port of South Louisiana's quarterly magazine. [Each issue](#) serves as a window into our 54-mile, three-parish district by blending news, features and artwork to showcase the developments and culture that are important to us and our region. Our *Port Log* is one major element of our marketing strategy designed to engage, educate and attract readers within and around our community.

SUMMER 2020

https://issuu.com/renaissancepublishing/docs/portlog_summer2020

FALL 2020

https://issuu.com/renaissancepublishing/docs/pl_fall_2020

WINTER 2020

https://issuu.com/renaissancepublishing/docs/portlog_winter20_de?fr=sNjgwNDIzNzExMjI

SPRING 2021

https://issuu.com/renaissancepublishing/docs/pl_sp21

1. Challenges & Opportunities

Until 2013, the Port of South Louisiana produced one magazine, *The Port Log*, which was largely constituted by an annual directory. However, in that format, it was essential that all writing be “evergreen,” since it would not be refreshed for another year. This posed the challenge of accurately representing an ever-evolving industry without news-specific coverage.

After contracting and consulting with Renaissance Publishing, we made the decision to move to a quarterly format. In this way, we are able to tell more stories at an increased frequency, which adds both news and follow-up value to the features in the magazine. Our publication now covers exciting developments and partnerships in the area as they unfold, along with updated and modern art direction.

Three issues a year (Spring, Summer and Fall) are dedicated exclusively to news and features, while our Winter issue supplements this material with both an alphabetical and categorical directory of our membership. The magazine is mailed to over 3,000 companies around the country, including maritime-related companies and site selectors, warehouse operators, political leaders, etc. It is also available on our website in an interactive format hosted by *Issuu.com*, also produced by our publisher.

Additionally, the change in frequency has given us an opportunity to strengthen our brand. Even though we are the largest tonnage port in the western hemisphere, we struggle with name recognition since our port is named “Port of South Louisiana,” and not affiliated by name with a location such as New Orleans or Baton Rouge. Mailing a quarterly publication to 3,000 companies, four times a year, increases familiarity with our name on a consistent basis. This has certainly helped educate people on the Port of South Louisiana.

The global challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic also presented us with a unique opportunity to demonstrate our Port's value to the community at large: when businesses and industries worldwide began experiencing the effects of the pandemic, the Port of South Louisiana's operations never slowed or halted. It was and is our duty to provide essential businesses with the vital goods and services they need to survive and thrive.

Port Log gave us an opportunity to [ease uncertainties](#) and fears pertaining to our region's economy. Jobs weren't just protected during this time—they were created. We gave the constituents of our region the assurance that their livelihoods and financial wellbeing were not at risk; instead, we focused on highlighting the ongoing prosperity in ours and surrounding industries. Our publication was a tool for demonstrating the resilience of the River Region, advancing our mission of establishing the Port's tri-parish jurisdiction as a prime location for spreading roots.

If there were any doubts about our region's resilience and longevity, *Port Log* helped to ease them. When the rest of the world stops, we keep moving.

2. Mission

Overall, the Port's goal is to facilitate public/private partnerships for the creation of intermodal terminals and industrial facilities. Our magazine serves as a tool for staff, commissioners and partners to market the Port of South Louisiana.

By producing a tangible piece of media, we are able to tell the stories that are most important to us outside of the digital realm, guaranteeing that our message is seen apart from the regular saturation of online news. That has become even more crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic. While other campaigns were forced to pivot online, we were still able to distribute a physical product, and each quarterly issue was another chance to position ourselves at the forefront of an overwhelming news cycle.

In addition, we believe educating locals about the wealth of opportunity here gives our region the greatest chance at success: not only do we want to contribute to a robust and thriving economy, but we also want to train and empower a homegrown workforce that can meet the needs of our industry.

With *Port Log*, we create direct, lasting connections to existing and potential customers, and that connection is used to spread the word about what's new, interesting and relevant in the area where we live and do business. We highlight many companies located in our 54-mile, three-parish jurisdiction to display their capabilities and to promote area projects that have the potential to stimulate further economic development and job creation. Each issue also includes a director's report, updated statistics and an industrial map, which illustrates every industry located in our jurisdiction, as well as sites that are available for industrial development. This further supports our mission of promoting and encouraging maritime commerce.

3. Planning, Programming & Goals

The goal of this project is to produce an informative marketing piece that provides detailed information on the activities and undertakings in our district, as well as increases community engagement with our Port.

Because our two main demographics possess varying levels of industry knowledge, our publication must serve as both a news tool and an everyday resource; therefore, our team developed a twofold publication structure.

Port Log's first target audience are maritime companies such as shipping agents, freight forwarders, barge companies and site selectors. To address the needs of that demographic, the front half of the magazine is weighted by relevant news, objectives and developments. With this dedicated space, we make certain that all of our assets are capitalized on, showing our total intermodal capabilities with water, road, rail and air.

This front section is also bolstered by community and human-interest features focused on the culture surrounding the Port. It is important to us to include light reading options alongside the nuts-and-bolts of our more technical, industrial stories, so that a layperson can be entertained and educated while high-level executives see the resonating effects of their own operations.

Our second target audience consists of local, state and national political leaders, various other community groups and individuals. To that end, the second half of our publication is resource driven: here, we include our industry map, categorical directory and alphabetical directory, which can be referenced for business leads, contact information and site selection. Anyone looking to know what life is like in and around our Port would find everything they need at the front of the book, while anyone looking for tools to engage with the Port and our partners need only flip to the back of the book.

Commerce at the Port of South Louisiana is important to everyday life in our jurisdiction, and we hope to illustrate the effects of our work by informing people outside of this industry about the initiatives we lead and support that influence day-to-day life. By consistently engaging with our magazine, industry experts are able to foster new and lasting connections to advance their own businesses—likewise, residents are able to transform from passive observers to informed and engaged community members.

Data compiled by our publisher shows this is working: our Spring 2021 digital edition of *Port Log* accumulated approximately 500 impressions and 150 reads within three weeks of publication, as compared to 200 impressions and 70 reads for the Spring 2020 digital edition within the same time frame. This is in addition to our increasing physical distribution list.

4. Actions, Outputs & Tactics

While we have often employed the use of digital press releases and news circulation, the typical internet user is inundated with online media on a near-constant basis. We found that there were quantifiable, superior results with direct print media, and there is research to support this: According to the City and Regional Magazine Association, average time spent on a website is just 2 minutes, while average time spent reading a magazine is 20-25 minutes. Internet users also report that they trust printed media more than digital news, with 90% of adults reporting engagement with a printed magazine in the last six months — the highest percentage of all time.

This information led us to increase our investment in print and to further our digital footprint with our magazine content. Our first strategy was to increase the frequency of our publication, to increase ad sales in the magazine for added investment for our business affiliates, and to circulate our magazines both physically and digitally to accommodate every reader's preferred format. Aside from our website, the magazine is our main method of marketing the Port and informing the stakeholders of innovation and progress.

We worked closely with our publisher, Renaissance Publishing, to determine how to best package a quarterly magazine. As previously detailed, each installment features news, light reading and resources. We dedicate at least 15 pages per issue to information about new improvements within the Port, and the development/expansion of private industry in the Port district. *Port Log* introduces the reader to high-level officials, commissioners and plant managers, as well taking it to the opposite end of the spectrum and showing the many benefits of living in South Louisiana. The strategy to add the "Around the Port" feature, which details examples of tourism attractions, activities and the culture of our region, has allowed us to combine work and play all to appeal to non-maritime citizens and industry professionals alike.

In addition, Renaissance Publishing writes, designs and prints our *Port Log* to ensure quality of content and design. A member of the business development department at the Port supplies the publisher with well-thought out topics to feature in each issue, along with the company and contact names that we want interviewed. The result is professionally written content that includes sources and attributions from prominent industry officials to add authority and value to each piece. Most of the pictures, including the cover, are either Port photos or are supplied by the company the story is written about. This is all coordinated through one person at our Port. All proofing, changes and recommendations are sent to the publisher from the Port. The Port gives the final approval of all copy included in the *Port Log* with the exception of advertising, which is paid for by each individual company.

Each magazine is produced on a three-month timeline. The first two weeks of this time are primarily dedicated to solidifying an editorial plan that covers all necessary and relevant news items; it's during this phase that we ensure the Port's focus and mission are being brought to the forefront. From that point, three weeks to a month are dedicated to the writers, who communicate with Port officials, the publisher and all necessary sources to produce the stories we want in the style we want. Once a story is turned in to the publisher, it receives a first round of editing before coming to the Port, at which point we conduct an internal review and provide

necessary edits. From there, any remaining time is spent perfecting the layout and design of the issue; back and forth edits are conducted between the publisher and the Port before press time.

5. Outcomes & Influence

Data and evidence point to the success of both our print and digital campaigns. The number of advertisements in our magazine has increased by 21% since 2016, showing that businesses and organizations see the benefits that come from an affiliation with the Port of South Louisiana. By continuing to improve the quality of our magazine and the material in it, the perception of our Port will only get better, and more and more community leaders will want to establish relationships with us.

Since launching the quarterly *Port Log*, we have received many calls, emails, and comments from businesses in the area who want to participate in the publication. Word of mouth and hand-to-hand distribution have also led to consistent growth in our distribution and mailing list, which we update quarterly and provide to our publisher before the publication of each issue. This means we are reaching more and more people every time we publish *Port Log*.

In addition, the magazine has driven more business to our publisher; they have acquired several contract projects from businesses and organizations who saw *Port Log* and were impressed enough to pursue their own projects. Most recent is [REGION magazine](#), the official publication of Greater New Orleans, Inc. That organization cited our magazine as their inspiration for creating their own marketing materials with Renaissance Publishing and modeled their content structure—part resource, part human-interest—after *Port Log*. Our model can be picked up and shaped by any organization or entity looking for creative ways to engage their community outside of the online world; therefore, our magazine has become not just an asset to us, but also to our partners, affiliates and citizens.

By highlighting the success and prosperity of our Port and our region, we are actively stimulating engagement and growth, and we will continue to implement and build on these strategies to maximize our connection to the community.