

Winner: Editorial/Op-Ed Category
ASTM International

100-word summary:

ASTM International is a global nonprofit that convenes experts from many industries to develop safety and performance standards. Recently, a group of aviation experts saw a growing need to create training standards for airplane technicians. Working through ASTM, they held their first meeting in Kansas City in August. ASTM's communications team researched Kansas City's ties to aviation and developed an executive op-ed that showed how ASTM was helping solve this challenge. The op-ed was placed in the Kansas City Star (top-30 U.S. newspaper by circulation) and was popular on aerospace/aviation social media channels.

Full Submission:

This oped was researched, written, pitched and placed specifically for the Kansas City Star, a top 30 newspaper in the U.S., by circulation.

Background:

A new ASTM volunteer group was launched in Kansas City to start developing training standards for aviation technicians. By developing such standards, the group hopes to broaden the pipeline of highly skilled workers in a fast-growing and ever-changing field... while also ensuring safety for passengers worldwide. Extensive local research was involved. This was our most successful Twitter post in 2015, with nearly 5,000 impressions.

To effectively pitch this, we needed to conduct research related to aviation in Kansas City. We found information related to three nearby organizations that were already active in aviation training. Also, we found a good hook in data related to the growing traffic at Kansas City International Airport, which became the lead.

In addition, we noticed a recent report from Boeing that aligned with our message and provided another timely hook.

By framing this as a societal concern, we were able to logically position our organization – and the new committee meeting being launched that week in Kansas City – as an important step toward a solution.

We were particularly proud of a few turns of phrase, such as: “they understand that tomorrow’s technicians are more likely to carry laptops than toolboxes” and “Let’s make sure that those passengers – from Kansas City to Kathmandu – can count on a strong supply of well-trained workers in the decades to come.”

Several aviation groups amplified this op-ed as well as the release that was simultaneously blasted that week announcing the launch of the committee. The link to this article was our most successful social media post of the year.