

Bellevue Communications Group Pepperpots Entry

Entry Category: Special-Purpose Publications

Title of Entry: Pennsylvania Convention Center 2014 Year in Review

Client: Pennsylvania Convention Center

100-Word Description

To highlight significant internal improvements throughout the Pennsylvania Convention Center in 2014 following the hiring of facility manager SMG and the adoption of a new Customer Satisfaction Agreement (CSA), Bellevue Communications Group designed and created a 2014 Year in Review publication. The Year in Review was sent via email to stakeholders, government officials, industry professionals, vendors and customers of the Center. It was also posted on social media and on the Center's website. The email blast had a 24 percent open rate, which is 3 percent above industry average. The Center's website, PAConvention.com, has 6,000 unique monthly visitors.

Two-Page Summary

Program Overview/Objectives

The Pennsylvania Convention Center serves as the economic driver of the Philadelphia region's tourism and hospitality industry by attracting trade show and convention attendees from around the country and world to the City. 2014 was the first full year of the Center being managed by SMG, one of the nation's leading facility operators. In May 2013, the Center's Board of Directors adopted a new a Customer Satisfaction Agreement (CSA) that included expanded exhibitor rights and new work rules for labor unions that service customers on the convention center's show floor. These changes were put in place as a result of customer feedback and challenges facing the Center and its marketing partner, the PHLCVB in booking major shows and conventions.

In an effort to communicate the Center's increased focus on customer service and the positive impact it has had in terms of new event bookings at the Convention Center, Bellevue Communications Group developed the 2014 Year in Review publication to share with stakeholders, local and state government officials, industry leaders, customers, vendors, and community members.

The goal of the Year in Review was to provide a greater understanding of the vital role the Convention Center plays in attracting millions of visitors to the Greater Philadelphia region each year. A complementary goal was to provide stakeholders and leaders with greater insight into the positive changes at the Center following the adoption of a new CSA.

As part of an existing retainer agreement to provide public relations services to the Center, Bellevue spent approximately 50 hours researching, planning, designing and implementing a distribution plan for the publication. Through meetings between Bellevue Communications Group, SMG and staff of the Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority, the concept of “It’s a New Day” came to life. All parties contributed ideas, provided resources and helped plan for the overall look and feel of the publication.

Initial research consisted of compiling extensive lists of email contacts across various sectors including government, arts and culture, science and technology, restaurateurs, local businesses and more. Once vetted, these lists became the primary target to receive the Year in Review, as they are most impacted by the success and development of the Center. These audiences were researched and chosen as the groups to which the Center wanted to showcase how it enhanced competitiveness in 2014 with the CSA by modernizing work rules and expanding rights for exhibitors at the facility.

The 2014 Year in Review also highlights the concentrated effort to deliver a positive customer experience and the renewed interest among meeting and show planners to return to Philadelphia which resulted in dramatic increases in bookings.

Execution

Once background information, financial data, economic impacts, messaging from leadership and future projections were developed, Bellevue Communications Group went to work designing the Year in Review. Using a cohesive style and the Convention Center’s color palette, a unique look inside one of the most innovative convention centers in the country was created. It was important to the Center to keep everything concise, easy to read and understand, and transparent.

The publication showcases the top conventions of 2014, projections for the next year, testimonials, media hits and more. It encapsulates pieces of information from all different capacities of the Center and summarizes that information for community leaders, customers, and stakeholders.

Once completed, the Year in Review was uploaded to the Convention Center website, posted on Facebook and Twitter, and emailed to more than 1,000 contacts. The use of email marketing and social media were important in order to showcase the sleek design and interactivity of the publication. Many individuals within the respective audiences were already receiving newsletters and updates from the Center, so we continued to use email as the main form of communication with this particular initiative.

Evaluation/Results

The 2014 Year in Review was sent to 1,085 email contacts curated by the Convention Center, Bellevue Communications Group, and SMG, with only a four percent bounce-back rate. The email was opened by 250 recipients for a 24 percent open rate, which is three percent higher than industry average. The click-through rate of 20 percent is over double the industry average. The publication continues to be hosted on the Center’s website, www.paconvention.com, which receives 6,000 unique views per month. Based on these numbers and the permanent nature of the

online Year in Review, the Center is confident that it is reaching the intended audiences and educating them on the positive changes that happened throughout 2014. The Year in Review is continuing to help community members, local and state officials and potential customers, vendors and exhibitors understand how the changes will impact them as well as the future of the Pennsylvania Convention Center.