PhilaPort

THE PORT OF PHILADELPHIA

Making Your Day. Better.

(August 2024–December 2025)

2026 Lighthouse Application

June 12, 2026

Public Relations/Communications Award	
Excellence in Print/ Digital Media Communications	Small Port
Excellence in Public Relations (PR) Campaign	



Background, Purpose, and Goals



The Port of Philadelphia, established under William Penn's 1701 City Charter, is today an independent Commonwealth agency known as PhilaPort. The agency manages 17 port facilities along the Delaware River, many highly visible from major corridors including Interstate 95, Interstate 76, and Columbus Boulevard.

Despite this visibility, PhilaPort identified a critical gap: residents could see the port, but did not understand its purpose, impact, or value. In 2024, PhilaPort's Marketing Department made a strategic shift in redirecting a significant portion of its budget to launch a public-facing media campaign designed to educate and engage the general public.

This marked a significant evolution from PhilaPort's traditional marketing approach, which focused primarily on attracting shippers and maritime business. While that mission remains central, the *"Making Your Day. Better."* campaign expanded the focus to include public awareness, emphasizing the port's role as a $25 billion economic engine supporting more than 12,000 family-sustaining jobs in the region.

PhilaPort has relied on generations of skilled labor from surrounding communities. However, it became clear that residents without direct ties to port employment often lacked awareness of the scale of port operations, the economic impact, and role in everyday life for the millions of people who live and work in the region.

Handling more than 18 million tons of cargo annually, PhilaPort is the nation's #1 fruit gateway and home to the world's largest fully enclosed refrigerated wholesale produce market. PhilaPort's Pier 84 is the premier cocoa import facility in the USA. Beans arrive from equatorial regions around the world. Cocoa beans stored at Pier 84 are eventually transported to a chocolate or cocoa processing company before the byproducts are sent to the country's leading candy makers such as Hershey, Mars, and Palmer. Yet this significance remained largely invisible in public perception.

To address this gap, PhilaPort partnered with a public relations and advertising team led by Boom Chicka to develop the *"Making Your Day. Better."* campaign built on a simple but powerful truth:

Everyday activities—from eating to shopping to receiving goods—are made possible in part by the Port of Philadelphia.

Anecdotally PhilaPort's Marketing Department was aware the public was not familiar with the port and its operations, which the public relations consultants confirmed. Public misidentification and confusion about PhilaPort's roles were a key challenge. Research revealed that many residents mistakenly associated the port with the Delaware River Port Authority (known for bridge tolls) and the Philadelphia Navy Yard and shipbuilding activities.

To better understand perceptions, the public relations team conducted surveys and analyzed media sentiment. These insights informed a targeted communications strategy aimed at clarifying PhilaPort's identity and reinforcing its value.

Implementation & Resources

PhilaPort had a modest budget to address misperceptions and develop a formidable brand. The campaign strategy centered on:

- Humanizing port operations
- Connecting global commerce to everyday life
- Positioning PhilaPort as essential, relatable, and impactful.

Media Mix and Approach (2024 Campaign)

Based on research and budget considerations, PhilaPort implemented a strategic media mix designed for high-frequency visibility in Philadelphia's major media market, which consisted of:

- NBC Sports Philadelphia
- KYW Radio
- META platforms (Facebook, Instagram)
- Interstate billboards
- Print advertising (Philadelphia Eagles Game Day Program).



Figure 1: Example of the image and message used across multiple media platforms between August and December 2024

These platforms were selected to maximize impressions at a high frequency during a 16-week campaign between August and December 2024. Within four weeks of outlining the campaign strategy, PhilaPort and its consultants finalized messaging, visuals, and assets for the campaign's official launch on August 26, 2024. This coincided with regional primary and secondary students returning to school as well as Eagles football.

Creative elements of the campaign emphasized everyday relevance ("From Our Ships to Your Shelves"), regional pride, and workforce contributions.

The campaign also drew inspiration from Governor Josh Shapiro's widely recognized message about Pennsylvania being a place that "gets shit done, or GSD," adapting this sentiment into relatable, though differently phrased, messaging about port workers and operations.

Please visit the following link: https://www.philaport.com/ships2shelves/ to listen and watch the media spots that were running on the local television and radio broadcast networks.

Billboard Strategy

A targeted analysis identified optimal billboard placements based on traffic patterns and visibility. Messaging such as:

"From Our Ships to Your Shelves – Making Your Day. Better." were deployed across both physical billboards and digital platforms, including The Philadelphia Inquirer's digital network, as shown below.

Results & Impact– 2024 Campaign

The initial 16-week campaign achieved strong performance across the multiple channels, as shown in the performance indicator summary in *Attachment 1* with a short-term impact that included:

- high overall impressions across television, radio, and digital media
- over 3.1 million impressions from billboards positioned along city arterial roadways
- strong audience penetration via sports-related programming
- clear differentiation in effectiveness across media types.



Figure 2: Example of the image and message appearing as a digital advertisement

Key insight

Sports television and radio content outperformed print advertising, particularly in a Philadelphia market strongly engaged with the Eagles football.

Strategic Integration & Scalability – 2025 Campaign

Building on 2024 insights and capitalizing on the Philadelphia Eagles' Super Bowl win in February 2025, PhilaPort expanded its campaign investment, while narrowing the media mix to increase its audiences' impressions.

Key Enhancements made in 2025

- Focus on Philadelphia Eagles-related programming, including a 30-second feature during the *Birds Huddle-Stock Up Stock Down* program.
- Continued use of billboards but now positioned on the highly-visible interstates.
- Messaging in the media spots continued and turned to highlighting PhilaPort's workforce contributions, regional identity, and industry leadership.

Creative Evolution & Adaptability

The 2025 campaign introduced new messaging, including "Getting Ship Done" (a creative adaptation of the Governor's GSD slogan) and rotating radio scripts reinforcing the *Making Your Day. Better.* theme. This phase of the media campaign emphasized the people behind the port—employees, tenants, and the broader regional workforce driving economic success.

Results, Evidence & Impact – 2025 Campaign

The 2025 campaign delivered measurable, high-impact results (*Attachment 2)*:

- a ten-fold increase to 31.2 million impressions from billboard placements along the interstates
- over 2 million impressions among adults 18+ via *Birds Stock Up Stock Down* sponsorship.



Figure 3: View seen on TVs of PhilaPort during the Birds Huddle

Long Term Result & Audience Engagement

The multi-year public media campaigns expanded brand recognition and public awareness. As millions traverse the city's major roadways each day and see PhilaPort's logo prominently displayed on the sides of warehouses and cranes, the public is more likely to connect the name with the important operations taking place on the waterfront that deliver the goods they consume in their home daily.

PhilaPort will continue using strong engagement across the city's sports media channels. Featured sports media sponsorships not only reach viewers at home but on televisions that broadcast sports games in food and drink establishments across the region.

Innovation and Relevant Impact

The *"Making Your Day. Better."* campaign represents a transformative shift in PhilaPort's economic development mission and approach to marketing.

Key Innovations:

- Reframing a complex maritime operation into a relatable, human-centered narrative
- Leveraging regional sports culture to maximize public visibility and engagement
- Using data-driven media selection to optimize impact within budget constraints
- Maintaining consistent messaging across multiple platforms

Relevant Impact:

- Increased public understanding of PhilaPort's role in the region
- Strengthened community engagement
- Improved brand recognition and clarity
- Elevated awareness of workforce opportunities and economic contributions

Conclusion

PhilaPort's *"Making Your Day. Better."* campaign successfully bridged the gap between visibility and understanding. By connecting global trade to everyday life, the campaign transformed public perception of the port from an overlooked industrial, waterfront presence to a vital, relatable contributor to the region's economy and quality of life.

Through strategic planning, creative execution, and measurable results, this initiative exemplifies excellence in communications and public engagement, making it a strong candidate for the 2026 Lighthouse Award.

ATTACHMENT 1

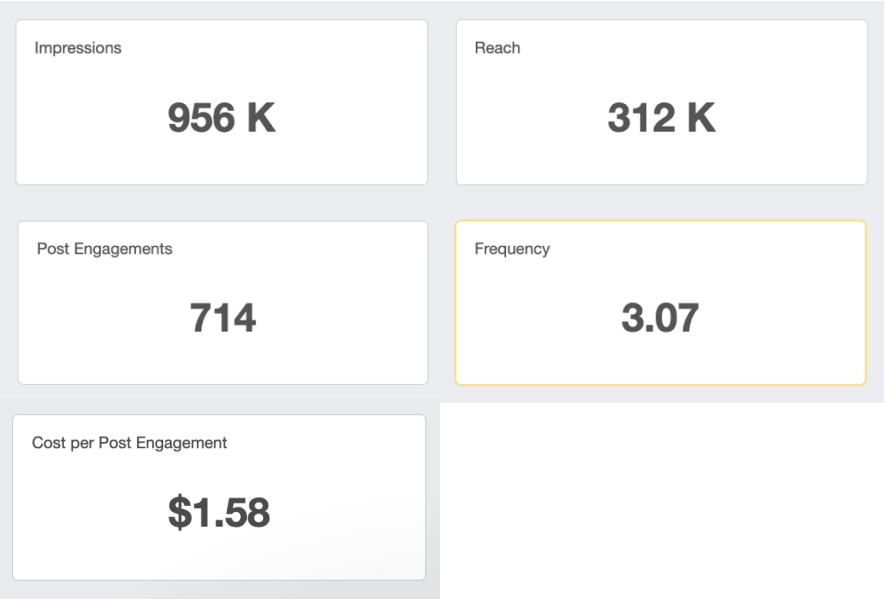
BOOM CHICKA

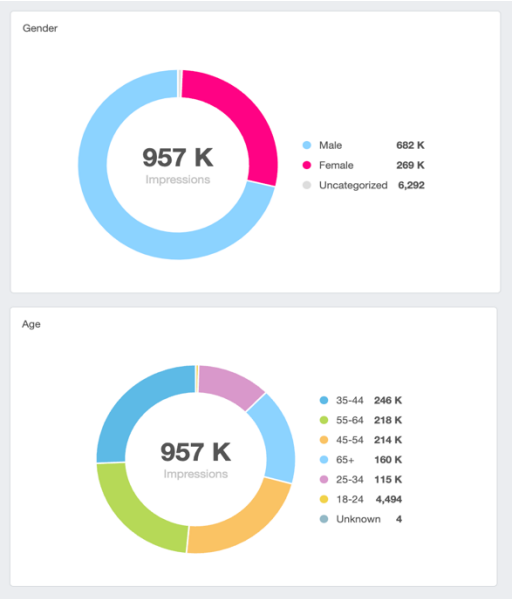
PAID MEDIA OVERVIEW

PLATFORM/ CHANNEL	RATIONALE	SCOPE	IMPRESSIONS
NBCSports Philadelphia (SportsNet)	• Delivers great brand association with beloved organizations and franchises. • Watched by blue- and white-collar workers, political leaders, influencers & executives. • High ratings locally, and across DMA.	Contracted Spots: **303** Actual Spots: **333**	**3,087,000** Impressions
KYW Radio	• Good penetration into city, county and state officials and staffers. • Placement of choice for large local employers and economic contributors.	Contracted Spots: **180** Actual Spots: **360**	**500,000** Audacy Streaming Impressions
KYW Website Takeovers	• Good penetration into city, county and state officials and staffers. • Placement of choice for large local employers and economic contributors.	2 Takeovers • **11/1** • **11/8**	Desktop Impressions: **65,573** Mobile Impressions: **38,085**
META (Facebook, Instagram)	• Ubiquitous across certain audience types. • Reaches a large demographic variety. • Excellent targeting options, including by location, time, profession, and hobby.	Campaign runs until **January 1st**	**955,578** Impressions
Out-Of-Home (Billboards)	• Three billboards close to PhilaPort. • Reaches a broad selection of audiences. • Supports internal and stakeholder communications objectives.	3 Billboards	**3,726,000** Impresssions
Print (Eagles GameDay Program)	• Positive team brand associations. • Repeat exposure (8 Home games). • 5x pass-along rate. • Packed stadiums every game.	½ Page Ad x 8 Home Games (plus post-season)	**107,500** Impressions x 5:1 Pass Along Rate PLUS post-season games
Philadelphia Inquirer (Inquirer.com)	• Banner ads on the website of the region's 'paper of record.' • Seen as key news venue by executives, politicians and other local leaders.		**778,165** Impressions

BOOM CHICKA

META (FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM) OVERVIEW





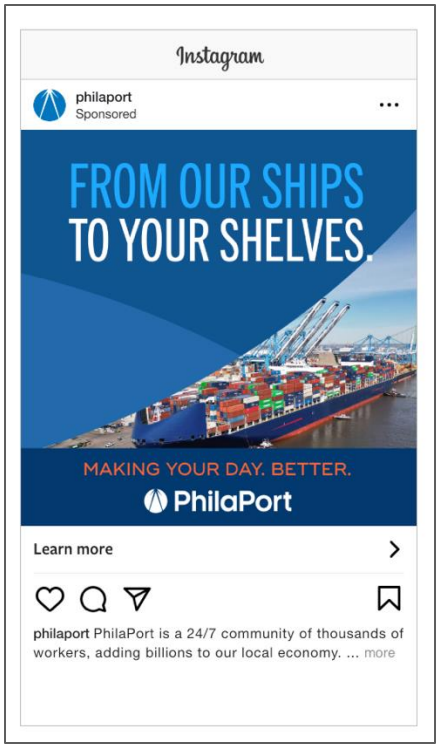
Desktop Variation



Mobile Variation



Instagram Variation



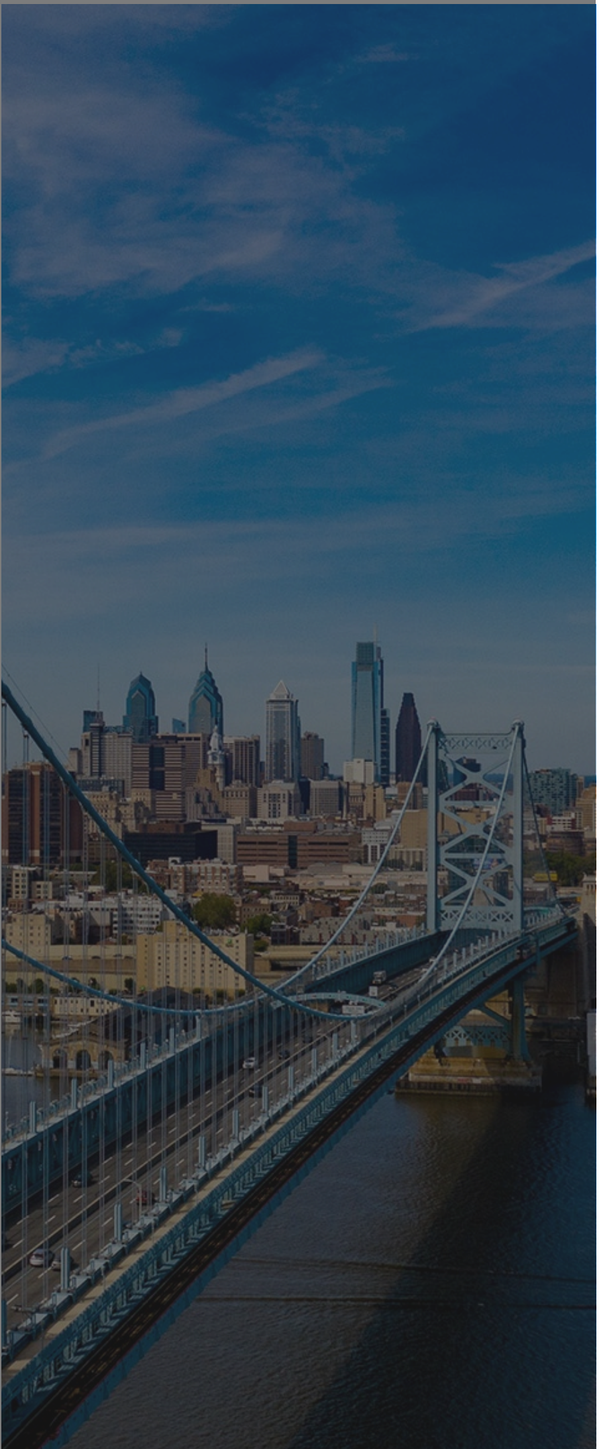
BOOM CHICKA

Country | Region — Showing 6 of 6 Rows

REGION	IMPRESSIONS	REACH	FREQUENCY
Pennsylvania	599,997	204,779	2.93
New Jersey	252,449	78,673	3.21
Delaware	102,640	28,102	3.65
Maryland	1,592	448	3.55
Unknown	4	0	0.00
Punjab region	1	0	0.00

Country | Region — Showing 3 of 3 Rows

COUNTRY	IMPRESSIONS	REACH	FREQUENCY
United States	956,828	312,052	3.07
? Unknown	4	0	0.00
India	1	0	0.00



NBC SPORTS

- PhilaPort logo exposure on open animation – Feature in Birds Huddle Weekly
- Sponsor logo chip on screen graphic during the feature
- Sponsor live talent mention “brought to you by PhilaPort…”
- 10x :30 spots in Eagles Birds Huddle Game Day
- 40x :30 Sports ROS Spots
- 18x Birds Huddle Features
- 60x :30 in Birds Huddle Weekly 6p-6:30p
- 90x :30 in SportsNet Central AM show 6a – 11a
- OTT plan targeting Adults and Eagles Fans throughout DMA

Eagles Regular Season: Sept – Dec 2025

Total Spots: 230

Total Impressions: 2,041,600 A18+ IMPS

PHILAPORT BIRDS EYE VIEW FEATURE







BIRDS HUDDLE FEATURE



AVC media group



KYW RADIO
NOV 2025 THRU JAN 2026

- The on-air Campaign delivered over 2.2 Million Impressions to Adults 25+ in the Philadelphia region
- Total Spots: 180
- Total Impressions: 2,214,000

ONLINE DELIVERY
NOV 2025 THRU JAN 2026

- 700,000 streaming impressions were delivered to Adults 25+ on the free Audacy streaming app in the Philadelphia Metro

AVC media group

PHILAPORT ON KYW RADIO









WEBSITE TAKEOVER ON KYW.COM

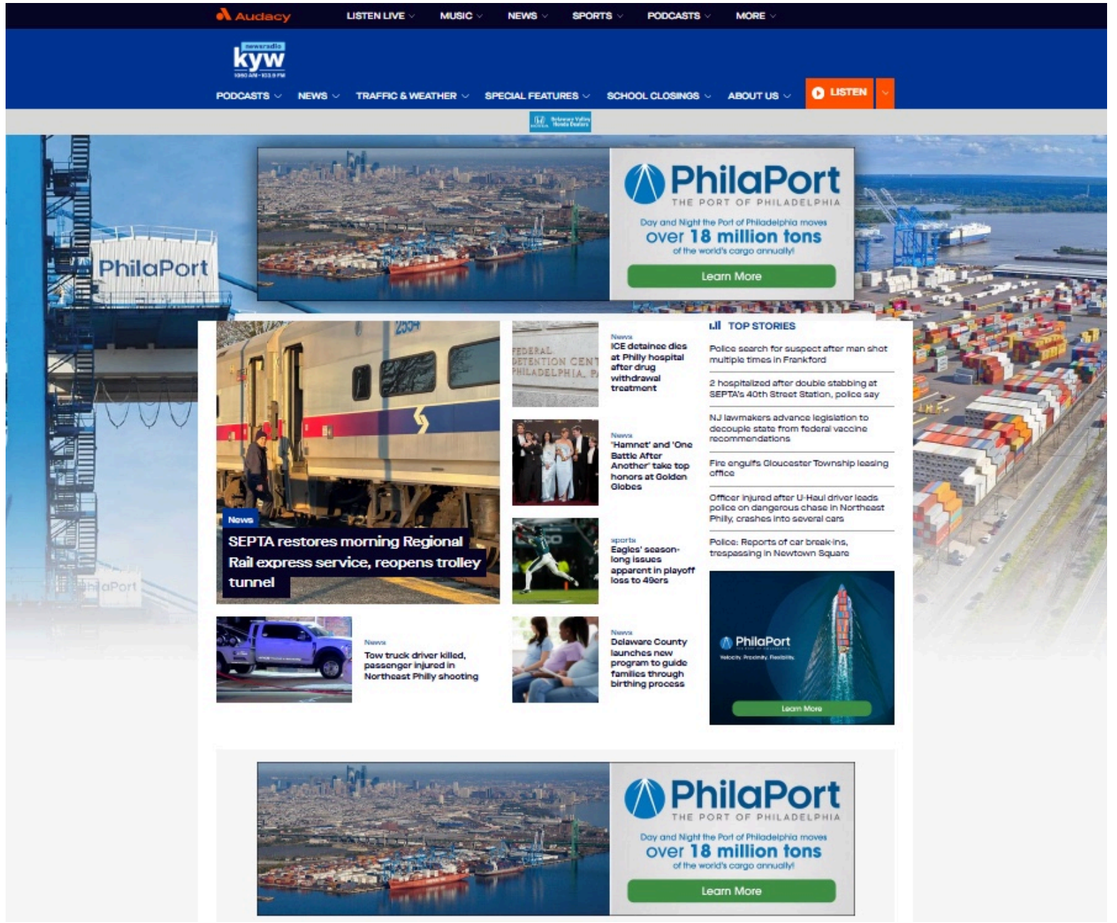
1/19/2026

Desktop Takeover

- Impressions: 6,378
- Clicks: 9
- CTR: 0.14%

Mobile Takeover

- Impressions: 999
- Clicks: 1
- CTR: 0.10%





BILLBOARDS

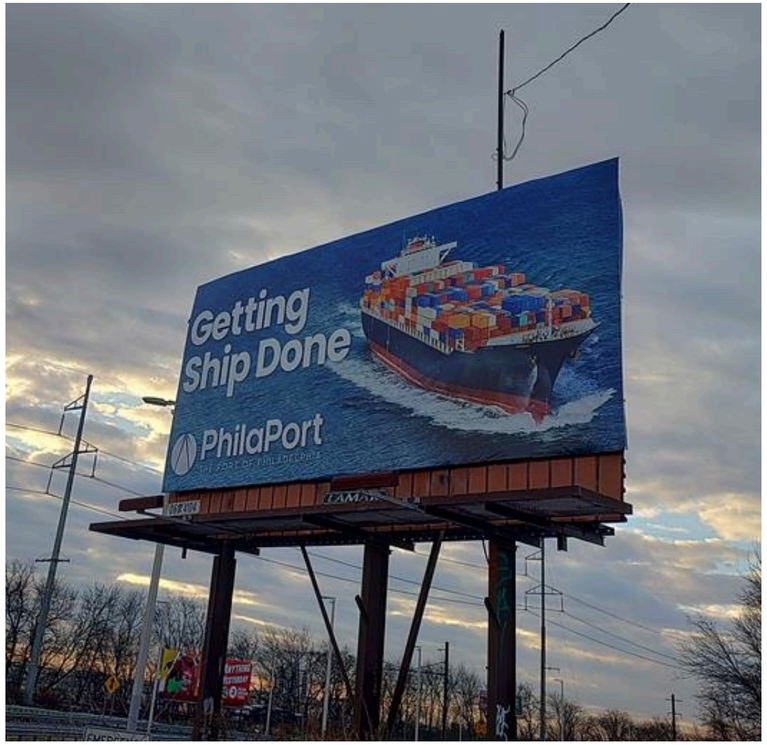
2 Billboards

I-76/SCH. EXP. E/O PASSYUNK SS FW

- Total Weekly Impressions: 1,681,162
- Total Impressions: 20,173,944
- Run Time: 12 Weeks (12/29/25 to 3/22/26)

I-95 @ OREGON WS FN

- Total Weekly Impressions: 919,014
- Total Impressions: 11,028,168
- Run Time: 12 Weeks (12/29/25 to 3/22/26)



Flight Time: 12 Weeks (12/29/25 - 3/22/26)

Total Weekly Impressions: 2,600,176

Total Campaign Impressions: 31,202,100

AVC media group