



**ALBANY COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY
PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

AGENDA

May 1, 2024 @ 11:00 a.m.

- 1. Approval of Minutes
Public Communications Committee Meeting – March 13, 2024**
- 2. Master Plan Communications**
- 3. Capital Project Communications**



ALBANY COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

March 13, 2024

Pursuant to notice duly given and posted, the Public Communications Committee meeting of the Albany County Airport Authority was called to order on March 13, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. in the Third Floor Conference Room located in the Terminal at the Albany International Airport, Albany, New York by the Public Communications member, Sari O'Connor, with the following present:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Steven Heider (Committee Member)
Sari O'Connor (Committee Member)
Janet Thayer (ACAA Board Member)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tom Nardacci (Committee Chair)

STAFF

Philip F. Calderone, Esq., Chief Executive Officer
Christine Quinn, Airport Counsel
Liz Charland, Administrative Services

ATTENDEES

Steve Smith, AvPorts Communications
Kevin Butterfield, Albany County Communications

1. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Heider moved to approve the minutes of the November 29, 2023 Public Communications meeting. The motion was adopted unanimously.

2. Master Plan Communications:

Mr. Smith provided a Strategic Communications Plan update. (Power Point attached.)

3. Capital Project Communications

Mr. Smith provided a Communications Report. (Power Point attached.)

Ms. O'Connor requested that the Arts Program be moved to a more prominent location on the Airport website. She also requested that the Writers Institute Reading Room be removed from the website.



Mr. Smith stated he will have these changes made.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.



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ALBANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Prepared by:
Steven A. Smith
Director of Communications

Prepared by:
Steven A. Smith
Director of Communications





ALBANY
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ALBANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

2023

Enplanements: 1.376 Million

Encatchment Area: 1.378 Million

Airlines and Nonstop Service Options:



American

- Dallas/Fort Worth
- Chicago (O'Hare)
- Philadelphia
- Washington DC (Reagan)
- Charlotte
- Miami

Delta

- Atlanta
- Detroit
- NYC (Laguardia)

JetBlue

- Orlando (MCO)
- Ft. Lauderdale

Southwest

- Baltimore
- Chicago (Midway)
- Orlando (MCO)
- Tampa
- Ft Myers
- Denver
- Washington DC (Reagan)

United

- Washington DC (Dulles)
- Newark
- Chicago (O'Hare)

Allegiant

- Nashville
- Myrtle Beach
- Orlando (SFB)
- Punta Gorda

Overview

The Albany International Airport (ALB) is the first and oldest municipal airport in the United States. What started as an airstrip on a polo field in 1908, has grown to a full-scale regional air service operation with seven commercial carriers that transport travelers to 25 year-round and seasonal destinations across the nation.

Nearly 1.4 million travelers pass through ALB's doors annually, including, but not limited to, individuals from across Northeastern New York, Western Massachusetts, and Southern Vermont. The airport is living up to its name as the "Gateway for the Capital Region," and is well on its way to cementing its reputation as an innovative leader and model for similarly sized airports around the nation and the globe.

As a result of its forward-thinking health and wellness initiatives initially established to address the challenges of the COVID crisis, ALB was the first airport in New York, second in the nation, and third in the world, to receive GBAC and Airports Council International (ACI) accreditations.

ALB is working to expand its role in the community by partnering with a variety of stakeholders on initiatives in sustainability, workforce development and safety. For example, in collaboration with the State University of New York (SUNY) Upstate Medical and Quadrant Biosciences, ALB in 2020 began offering saliva-based PCR diagnostic testing for airport passengers and employees – the first airport ever to do so.

In addition, ALB has established strong partnerships with General Electric (G.E.) Research and Development and G.E. Aviation and in 2021 was selected as a digital incubator for post COVID technology. As a result, ALB became the first commercial venue to utilize GE's Health and Wellness app based on block chain technology.

ALB is one of a select few airports to receive ACI accreditation for its efforts to improve sustainability and aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040. The airport partnered with two major research universities - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) and SUNY Albany - to conduct test bed research in areas ranging from artificial intelligence, biometrics, atmospheric science, and block chain technology, all with the goal of advancing progress in these fields for a more aviation sustainable future.



ALBANY
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Also last year, ALB became the first airport in the U.S. and only the fourth in the world to receive ACI accreditation for its initiatives to comply with United Nations building standards for the disabled, advancing the goal of making the horizon-opening experience of travel more equitable and accessible for all.

Like many others, the aviation industry faces challenges in employee retention, recruitment, and overall workforce staffing. Aircraft maintenance has emerged as a particularly difficult – yet crucial – area in the face of an ongoing labor shortage. ALB has partnered with Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) to start a new aviation academy beginning with a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certified mechanics training program to inspire a new generation of students to pursue a career in the field of aviation.

Unlike some of its peers, ALB has made a strong recovery from the post-pandemic downturn. In fact, 2023 was a record financial year, with the largest revenues in ALB history. As a result, ALB has received two bond rating increases- from S&P and from Moody's- each citing the airport's effective leadership and robust financial profile. ALB also has improved its air service offerings at a time when other similar sized airports are losing air service. Highlights include new daily American Airlines service to Dallas-Fort Worth, one of the largest airports in the world, and the announcement that Avelo Airlines will launch service at ALB with offerings to Raleigh, North Carolina, one of ALB's top unserved markets.

In 2020, ALB began the process of updating its master plan for the first time in more than 30 years. The goal is to adopt a smart approach to new technological development and implementing policies and procedures to guide the airport through a challenging but exciting time for the aviation industry. In 2023, the final draft of the updated master plan was officially submitted to the FAA.

Due to the airport's success in forging strong relationships at both the state and federal levels, funding has been secured to improve both passenger facilities and the airfield. Over the last four years, more than \$200 million worth of projects have either been completed, are underway, or are poised to commence. These efforts will completely transform the airport experience for travelers, building on ALB's status as an exciting and dynamic gateway for New York's Capital Region - all in keeping with the belief that airports are a bellwether of a region's health, vibrancy, and vitality.

In light of its many initiatives and successes, ALB has a unique opportunity to continue its upward trajectory, raise its profile – locally, nationally, and internationally – and solidify its role as a model and leader in the field. To accomplish this, the airport needs a comprehensive communications strategy that will educate stakeholders, decision makers, elected officials, and members of the public about its many achievements and initiatives.

The strategy will also demonstrate ALB's unique role in advancing economic growth in the Capital Region, promoting sustainability to help the state achieve its ambitious climate change goals, and, above all, enhance and improve the traveler experience.

Goals

- Establish ALB as a thought leader and model in the aviation industry.
- Demonstrate ALB's commitment to enhancing the traveler experience through infrastructure improvements, and investments in technology and innovation, by keeping the public informed on a regular basis.
- Use existing and new stakeholder partnerships to showcase ALB as a gateway to the Capital Region and a key contributor to economic growth.
- Raise awareness about ALB to ensure its ongoing growth and attract more travelers and airlines.



GOING PLACES.

Approach

Given the many achievements and innovations at ALB over the last several years, as well as ongoing facility and infrastructure improvements, the Airport will implement a multifaceted comprehensive plan to communicate to various stakeholders, raise its public profile and build on ongoing successes.

The plan includes three primary tracks: earned media, paid media, and social media, which enables ALB to control its own narrative. In addition, the Airport will use existing and expanded relationships with third-party stakeholders who can serve as surrogates to amplify ALB's importance in our region and highlight ongoing efforts to improve and serve as a model for airports around the nation and the globe.

MESSAGING FRAMEWORK

ALB will develop a master set of messages that will guide all activity. A list of initial framework messages for consideration include:

- **Going Places ALB** : This slogan was developed as part of ALB's 2020 re-brand. It highlights both the airport's own positive trajectory in innovation, technology, and facility improvements, as well as the role it serves in helping travelers reach their destinations conveniently, easily, and safely.
- **Innovating for the Long Term**: The ALB of the future will be modernized and accessible, employing the latest technology – thanks to millions in critical infrastructure and programmatic investments – to optimize operations and improve the traveler experience.
- **Smart, Sustainable, and Safe**: ALB is working with outside partners and stakeholders to help reach its clean energy goals. We also prioritize the safety of travelers and employees alike, while consistently reassessing how we do business to identify areas of opportunity for improvement.



Communications Activity

ALB will implement a pipeline of content aimed at promoting, highlighting, and educating decision makers, elected officials, members of the community and the news media – locally, as well as across the state and nation - about ALB's brand, ongoing investments, projects, partnerships, goals, and activities related to air travel. The activity pipeline would include but not be limited to:

- **Master Messaging Framework:** Create a document that will serve as the foundation for publications, story pitches, stakeholder engagement and other collateral.
- **Media Fact Sheets:** Draft one-page media fact sheets on key ALB initiatives such as the terminal expansion project, Concourse A rehabilitation and air service options.
- **Story Pitches:** Work closely with traditional news media and select trade publications to pitch stories that will promote the airport's brand, educate viewers/readers about topics related to the airport, and help raise awareness about the airport's ongoing efforts to enhance the traveler's experience.
- **Reporter Briefings:** Hold on-the-record briefings and interviews with relevant reporters to educate them about the ALB's vision, commitments, and ongoing investments.
- **E-Newsletter:** Develop and send out quarterly e-newsletters to subscribers to provide the latest information and updates about ALB directly in their inboxes.
- **Op-Eds:** When appropriate, consider drafting op-eds signed by ALB leadership and/or third parties to be placed in the Albany Times Union, as well as other regional, statewide, or trade publications where they are likely to have the most impact.
- **Digital Content:** Continue to create digital content that can be used via a variety of owned platforms to amplify key messages. When needed, ALB will continue to work Vibrant Brands in the creation of digital content that is brand specific. Digital content could include social media platforms or video.

Social Media

According to Pew Research Center, 8 in 10 Americans get their news from a digital device and/or social media. It is imperative that ALB continue to leverage social media to communicate its story and control its own messaging on these digital platforms. Social media platforms are the quickest and most efficient method to inform the public about current events, travel advisories, and updates that might impact their travel plans.

Currently ALB uses the following social media platforms:

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/AlbanyAirport
- Twitter: @AlbanyAirport
- Instagram: @flyalbany
- LinkedIn: Albany International Airport

Social Media Goals:

- Create and post content that educates travelers, guests, and visitors on what they need to know if coming to ALB.
- Create and post content to actively engage with followers.
- Continue to monitor social media messengers on all platforms to serve as a customer service center to help answer questions followers may have pertaining to air travel and more.
- Share relevant content from third party influencers who advocate on behalf of the airport's success and vision.

To inform and engage with social media followers, ALB's communications team will create a social media calendar to maximize posts and ensure content is relevant to our audience.

Many positive stories, moments and events regularly occur at the Airport. ALB is encouraging employees, travelers, and airport enthusiasts (i.e.: plane spotters) to capture and send relevant content to the Director of Communications for social media consideration.



Third Party Engagement

Support from third-party influencers can both help amplify ALB's positive messaging and help offset criticism it may receive. Business leaders, elected officials, public safety officials, workforce and education partners and others can also speak to the need for, and benefits, of continuing to invest in the Airport.

Cultivating and engaging with a broad stable of third-party voices will help make the case for continued long-term investments at ALB while spreading the word about the innovative and forward-thinking work taking place at the airport. Third-party voices can be utilized in a variety of ways, including but not limited to:

- Participate in media interviews.
- Share support on social media.
- Communicate with lawmakers and other decision makers.
- Participate in airport specific events, committees, and meetings.
- Relay back to the airport, any information, issues, or opportunities taking place around the region that align with the airport's vision and commitment to serving as a gateway for economic growth.
- Participate in videos that ALB can share on their social media platforms.

ALB will also continue to work with the following to help amplify our message:

- Academic leaders
- Trade associations
- Community organizations
- Business and political advocates

Additional organizations with which to engage in messaging efforts might include but not be limited to:

- Albany County
- Capital Region Chamber and Center for Economic Growth
- NY CREATES
- Global Foundries
- Discover Albany
- General Electric
- RPI
- SEDC
- University at Albany

Website

ALB will continue to work with Vibrant Brands to host www.albanyairport.com; an online information clearing house for key stakeholders that contains multiple landing pages with information about the airport. The website is also a digital platform that promotes ALB's brand. Some of the elements on the airport's website include:

- **About ALB:** Background on the airport including size, runways, air service and more.
- **Flights:** Provides flight status information in real time as it relates to both arrivals and departures.
- **Parking and Transport:** This page lists parking fees, available parking lots, as well as information about ground transportation including, but not limited to, shuttles, ride sharing and taxis.
- **Expansion:** As the airport continues to transform its look and undergo several renovations and major construction projects, this page serves to educate the public on the terminal expansion project funded by New York State and the Federal Government. This page also provides the public with critical updates on the project that could impact travel.
- **Airport Authority:** The Albany County Airport Authority page lists several items including information about the Authority, a list of its board members, committees, and minutes from previously held public meetings.
- **Careers:** As ALB continues to seek out individuals seeking employment at the airport, this page displays current vacancies at AvPorts, Million Air, the airlines, rental companies and food and concession vendors.
- **Newsroom:** To ensure that there is a place where the public can view any news releases that were previously sent to earned news media, all news releases are placed on the website in their own dedicated section. News releases are archived. This strategy is also helpful in that it allows ALB the ability to directly share links to news releases via social media, email, and other means to further inform the public.

Paid Media

In an effort to amplify ALB's message and communication activities, the airport has placed digital ads with the Albany Times Union – notably in the paper's online news feeds and monthly Travel Newsletter. The Airport also occasionally places ads in the Albany Business Review. Paid advertising helps raise awareness about ALB's brand, pushes readers to www.albanyairport.com, and helps educate the public about what is happening at the airport.

ALB will continue to meet with marketing staff at the Times Union or other publications regularly to review future advertising opportunities, which could be timed to coincide with key milestones (i.e.: topping off ceremony, new airline announcements, etc.)

Media Monitoring and Social Listening

ALB will continue to track online activity, media mentions, and social media sentiment to evaluate communication strategies and determine if any changes need to be made. This will also assist in ALB's ability to pitch stories and engage with media and social media followers.



*Getting You From
Point A to Point B
#GoingPlacesALB*



Terminal Expansion Construction Project

In August of 2023, ALB broke ground on a \$100 million construction project that is going to expand the main terminal. The project, which is completely funded by a \$60 million award from the Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitalization Competition, and \$40 million from the Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, will modernize the entranceways, improve, and expand the security checkpoint area, add additional seating areas, and make other improvements to reduce congestion and ease the flow of passengers. Additional amenities, including updated business center, a children's play area, and a neurosensory room, all with the goal of enhancing the traveler's experience.

Construction is underway with an anticipated completion date during the first quarter of 2025.

As an airport that does not have the ability to shut down during the construction project, a comprehensive communications strategy is necessary to ensure that travelers, guests, and airport tenants are aware of updates, changes, and temporary workarounds to ensure they can continue to access ALB safely and with minimal inconvenience.

Key elements of this strategy include but are not limited to:

- Continue to update www.albanyairport.com/construction to ensure that there's a one-stop-shop for all information about the construction project, including a complete list of travel tips and major construction updates.
- Utilize social media platforms to push out digital content, including visuals and video to show progress and educate followers as to what is taking place.
- When appropriate, send out news releases about certain milestones in the project. This is especially important during busy travel periods where large amounts of travelers are anticipated to be coming to the airport.





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CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



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www.albanyairport.com/construction

Communications Update

Steven A. Smith

Director of Communications

Rotunda Demolition

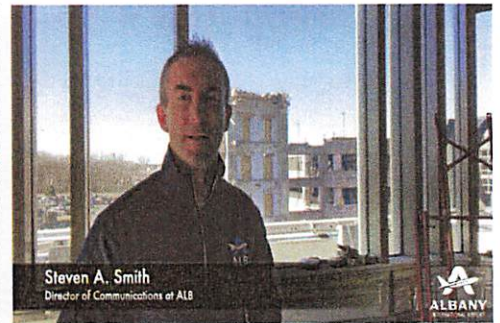


Signage



Earned and Social Media

- Consistent Messaging
 - Two Hour Arrival
 - Access to Terminal
 - Drop-Off/Pick-Up
 - Parking Garage
 - Temporary Walls
 - Sidewalk Closures
 - Signage
- Videos
 - Rotunda
 - Validators
- Concourse A Award
- NAWIC Event



Website

- www.albanyairport.com/construction



- **19** March 5, 2024: The ALB Information Desk has been moved. It is now directly across from carousel #2 in baggage claim and directly adjacent to Dunkin'.
- **20** March 11, 2024: Demolition on the canopies in front of the main terminal is expected to begin on Monday, March 18th. As a result, certain areas of the sidewalk will be closed. Some vestibules will also be closed. Follow signage to navigate closures.
- **21** March 11, 2024: Beginning soon, those dropping off or picking up passengers in front of the main terminal should be advised that due to construction activities, the driving lanes will shift. The driving lane will shift to the former commercial lane near the north parking garage. Please follow security personnel and signage.



Questions, Comments?



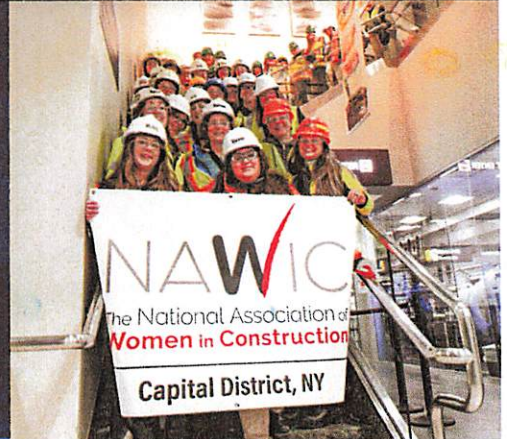
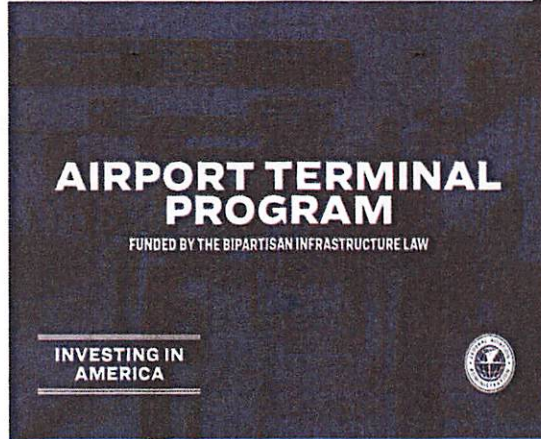
Communications Report

Steven A. Smith
Director of Communications



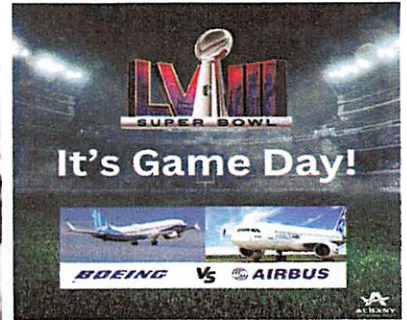
Earned Media

- Winter Storm (2/12)
- Diversions (2/13)
- Avelo Airlines (2/15)
- NY Jets (2/19)
- Concourse A (2/20)
- Winter Break (2/23)
- NAWIC (3/5)



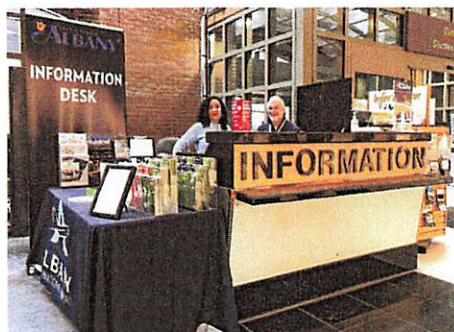
Social Media

- Super Bowl Fun
- Winter Storm Tips
- Taylor Swift
- Boeing C-32A
- Valentine's Day
- Two Hour Reminders
- President's Day
- Travel Options
- Happy Leap Day Birthday
- Employee Appreciation Day
- National Women in Aviation
- Specialty Aircraft
- Ryan Gosling AKA Ken



Construction Updates on Social Media

- Rotunda Demo (Photos and Video)
- Construction Update (Video)
- Validators (Video)
- New Signage
- Temporary Walls
- Sidewalk/Vestibules
- Information Desk Moved
- Escalators
- Continue to Push to Web



Social Media Insights

Facebook – 90 Days:

- Reach – 2.0M
- Content Published – 105 posts
- Engagement – 249.6K

Instagram – 90 Days:

- Reach – 6,789
- Content Published – 127
- Engagement – 575



Comments

Most relevant ▾



Ashley Haile

Looking forward to the new 😊

4w [Love](#) [Reply](#) [Hide](#)

1 🗨️



Top fan

Jean Duxbury

Arrived back at ALB last night around 7. Your team of folks outside the baggage area were doing a great job directing traffic, pick-ups and pedestrians in that very busy area.

1w [Love](#) [Reply](#) [Hide](#)

1 🗨️



Top fan

Noah Buckwalter

I can't wait to see the new terminal.

4w [Love](#) [Reply](#) [Hide](#)

2 🗨️



Tim Coulson Sr.

Great info , Like I've said before it's going to look great 👍✈️✈️✈️😊.

3d [Love](#) [Reply](#) [Message](#) [Hide](#)

1 🗨️



Top fan

Scott Summers

ALB has always been my gateway to the world and I'm really excited to see and experience the final result.

3w [Like](#) [Reply](#) [Hide](#)

2 👍



Top fan

Michael Miranda

These updates are super. It keeps everyone in the loop.

3w [Like](#) [Reply](#) [Hide](#)

4 👍



Steve Clark

I appreciate the yellow vest people in front of the terminal that keep the traffic flowing. They are doing a great job and make it easier to navigate the construction zone.

21h [Love](#) [Reply](#) [Message](#) [Hide](#)

4 👍❤️

Website – Online Clearinghouse

- Updates to Construction Page
- News Releases Added to Newsroom



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Looking Ahead

- Story with Spectrum News
- Story with AAAE
- Saint Patrick's Day
- Ongoing Construction Updates
- Airlines Continue Join in ALB Messaging
- E-Newsletter
- "Going Places" Podcast

