



Outdoor Advertising Association of America

## Look Out: An Amazing Year is Ahead

February 6, 2017



### My Turn

Nancy Fletcher

After the swearing-in and inaugural events in Washington, DC, I just returned from the road. As we launch a new year with a new Congress and a new President, OAAA members want to know what's next.

Here is a list of important industry events, services, and highlights to expect in the next few months.

### National Convention + Expo

The 2017 OAAA\Geopath National Convention + Expo in New Orleans, LA, May 15-17 features new ideas, new technologies, and new public service. In a world of clicks, likes, and page views, out of home advertising is well positioned for growth and success. The convention theme – Look Out – reflects our optimism and growing prominence in the changing media landscape.

[LookOut2017.com](http://LookOut2017.com) lists speakers, exhibitors, and convention details. Register by February 17 for the early bird discount.

### 2017 Awards

At the convention, we'll present the OBIE Awards, which have been revamped with new categories and awards as we celebrate 75 years of creative excellence. The industry will also pay tribute to our most influential leaders and visionaries with the presentation of the OOH industry awards; be sure to [get your nominations in](#) by February 20.

The awards show and after-party will be held at the magical Mardi Gras World, just up the Mississippi River from the convention hotel, via a journey on the Creole Queen Riverboat.

### The Value of OOH

In March, OAAA will release new independent research on 35 poster campaigns in small, medium, and large markets. This report, from Nielsen, validates the power of posters in boosting brands.

At our convention in May, look out for new analysis by Benchmarking on the powerful return on investment (ROI) produced by OOH ads compared to digital, broadcast, and print.

A related point: customers love relevant case studies, the more current the better. [Learn more and register here for OAAA's Local Case Study Contest](#) (deadline: February 15). The top entry wins a trip to the national convention in New Orleans; \$100 each for five runners-up.

## Sharing Smarter Insights

This year, OAAA's Steve Nicklin will visit another 100 agencies to educate them on the value of OOH. This week, Steve will be in New York City; next week in Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, PA. He seeks your input on agencies to visit when in your market, so please let him know at [snicklin@oaaa.org](mailto:snicklin@oaaa.org).

I've been in this business for nearly four decades. Until now, our medium has rarely been featured alongside other media in ad-agency planning tools. In late March, a popular planning tool called SQAD will include market average price planning information for billboards and street furniture in the top-100 markets. This is a step toward leveling the playing field with planners and making OOH more of a core media buy.

## New Public Service

After celebrating the centennial of our national parks in 2016, the OOH industry will partner with National Geographic and Photo Ark to help protect endangered animals.

At the New Orleans convention, Joel Sartore will share his passion to photograph the world's threatened animals, to help bring awareness to the reality of species extinction. His premier photography will appear on a variety of OOH platforms in a new public service campaign this spring and summer. The campaign will officially launch on May 19, which is Endangered Species Day.

## Litigation/Rules/Politics

The latest OAAA survey (January 2017) shows 7,000 digital billboards nationwide.

In 2016, a federal appeals court rejected Scenic America's lawsuit attacking digital billboards; Scenic America appealed to the US Supreme Court.


Last week, the US Supreme Court asked for responses from the defendants by March 1 (the government and OAAA as intervenor for the industry). On behalf of the industry, OAAA will coordinate a response to the Supreme Court.

These types of requests from the Supreme Court are routine, and do not necessarily mean that the Supreme Court will accept a case. OAAA's outside counsel (Kannon Shanmugam of Williams & Connolly) says the Supreme Court is unlikely to take the Scenic America case.

Scenic America filed this lawsuit in 2013. Since then, OAAA has invested more than \$1.3 million defending digital technology. Scenic America lost in federal District Court and on appeal, and then filed a *writ of certiorari* to the Supreme Court, which is pending.

Before President Trump was sworn in on January 20, the previous Administration issued a new federal rule affecting billboard climbers. Working with member companies, OAAA immediately assessed the fallout, launching two actions on behalf of the industry: a formal request to clarify the new rule and also a request for more time to assure compliance.

Last week, the US Senate confirmed President Trump's nomination of Elaine Chao as Secretary of Transportation. She will soon fill key vacancies at US-DOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).



Meanwhile, 15 newcomers have been assigned to the House committee that controls billboards.

OAAA will educate these elected officials, to protect your assets, starting last week with newly elected Congressman Doug LaMalfa (R-CA). This week, OAAA meets with Congressman Alan Lowenthal (D-CA).

I look forward to speaking with you throughout the year and hope to see you in New Orleans this May. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me at [nfletcher@oaaa.org](mailto:nfletcher@oaaa.org) or call me at (202) 833-5566.