



2013 Highly Commended Case Study

University of Wollongong Carbon Reduction

Moving the Masses – a Commuter Revolution

Section 1: About the project

Summary

We all love the convenience of car travel but there are major environmental, social and financial impacts associated with their use. The University of Wollongong (UOW) has developed and implemented a significant Sustainable Transport Strategy to shift transport modes from the single driver car to more sustainable and active modes of transport. The UOW Transport Project is a how to guide for other education institutions looking to move the masses from the convenient to the sustainable.

Project partners

Wollongong City Council, Roads & Maritime Services, Neighbourhood Forum 5, TfNSW

Section 2: The results

The problem

25,000 staff and students + 3,000 parking spaces = limited parking and an opportunity for carbon reduction!

The approach

The Transport Project aims to encourage staff and students to shift their travel behaviours to active and public transport, increase and improve the safety of public transport options and to improve access to the University for walking, cycling, public transport and vehicles.

Some initiatives have been simple and practical; others required extensive investment and organisational commitment. From creative marketing campaigns, use of technology in real time shuttle apps and a state of the art parking guidance system to the good old fashioned timetable (shrunk to a handy pocket sized companion), the combination of these activities has resulted in nothing short of a commuter revolution!

Our goals

Up until 2007 the trends in transport were generally in the wrong direction with an increase in car usage, decrease in public transport and decrease in walking and cycling. Our goal was to turn this trend around.

Obstacles and solutions

Traffic Congestion	Introduction of parking guidance system including a digital signage network and web application for parking availability
How to gather information	Run biennial transport surveys (headcount and questionnaire) from 2007 – 2013 to understand attitudes, measure the problems and monitor results relating to transport. 4,500 responses with \$1,500 in Prizes offered.
How to raise awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revamped transport web site with advice for travel “from your suburb”;



Institutional Profile

- 22,203 students (includes full and part time students)
- 2531 staff



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pocket shuttle guides and Transport Access Guides produced and distributed annually; • “Getting to UOW” promotions for staff and students; • Establishment of a Bicycle Users Group (BUG) and participation in National Ride to Work Day; and • Real time apps for shuttle services.
How to create a mode shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of trip cycling facilities (secure bike lock ups with showers and lockers); • Improved security & signage on shared paths • Introduction of 400 free carpooling spaces for those who travel with 3 or more in a car • Introduction of three free shuttle services linking UOW to the train station, student accommodation, the Wollongong CBD and Innovation Campus (iC)

Performance and results

Biennial transport surveys show a continued decline in the number of car users over a 6 year period despite an increase in student numbers of over 25%.

- Since 2007 the UOW commuters using cars have dropped from 69% to 58%;
- Public transport participation has increased since 2007 from 17% to 28%;
- Active transport (cycling and walking) participation has not changed overall (walkers and cyclists who have switched to shuttle buses are balanced by new active travellers);
- UOW has not built any new parking since the Transport Project commenced.

Section 3: The future

Lessons learned

- Conversion of existing UOW nominal payment bus services to free services and the introduction of the NSW State Government funded free Gong Shuttle has had the largest impact on transport behavior.
- Likewise free parking for carpoolers has had a large impact on those who drive and provides an alternative for those who come from areas that are not well serviced by public transport.
- Improvements such as improved security & signage on shared path to train station and CBD and additional paths around campus have assisted in encouraging active transport.

Sharing your project

- Communicated to new students through Getting to UOW promotions at Enrolment, Orientation, Mature & Postgraduate Events and Parents Nights.
- Campaigns such as Sustainable Transport Story competition, Transport Ninjas, Sustainable Transport Breakfast, You Can't Do This While Driving, We Carpool Because have proven successful in sharing transport information with students. A sustainable transport challenge was run for staff.
- Presented at the 2013 ACTS! Conference.

What has it meant to your institution to be highly commended at the Green Gown Awards Australasia?

Recognition of the significant investment UOW has made into sustainable transport and a great opportunity to share information with other universities who are looking for ways to reduce their carbon emissions.

Further information

Jacqui Besgrove – Transport Project Officer | Email: transport-project@uow.edu.au | Phone: + 61 2 4221 3660
Fax: +61 2 4221 3192 | Web: <http://www.uow.edu.au/transport>