

Connect the Community - Development of a Public C-ITS Awareness Campaign

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Abstract

The Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) will deliver the Ipswich Connected Vehicle Pilot, Australia's largest trial of Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems (C-ITS) technologies from late 2019.

A key objective of this Pilot is to increase the public's awareness and understanding of C-ITS, so as to increase consumer confidence in the technology and increase uptake. To meet this objective, and to raise awareness of the existence of the Pilot, TMR will deliver a public C-ITS awareness campaign.

This paper discusses the methodology and approach of this campaign, and implications for public education and Pilot participant recruitment.

Background

TMR is delivering the Cooperative and Automated Vehicle Initiative (CAVI) with the purpose of preparing the department for the emergence of advanced vehicle technologies with safety, mobility and environmental benefits on Queensland roads. The largest component of CAVI is the Ipswich Connected Vehicle Pilot. The Pilot will include up to 500 vehicles retrofitted with C-ITS technologies. C-ITS enables vehicles to 'talk' to other connected vehicles, roadside infrastructure and traffic management centre systems to share relevant safety-related messages for drivers. The driver is still in control of the vehicle, and there is no element of vehicle automation.

Currently, there is a lack of awareness and some confusion in the general community about C-ITS, connected vehicles, automated vehicles, and connected and automated vehicles (CAVs) with most people defaulting to their limited knowledge of fully autonomous or driverless vehicles.

Research results from a 2017 TMR survey showed that around a quarter of southeast Queensland motorists (28%) surveyed were aware of cooperative vehicles. Despite not being commercially available, one in ten (7%) responded they had experienced a cooperative/connected vehicle, supporting the result that motorists are confused about what these vehicles are. Focus group research conducted in 2018, supported these findings.

Method

In 2019, TMR will be developing and delivering a C-ITS public awareness campaign. This campaign aims to address the lack of awareness and understanding of what connected vehicles are, how C-ITS technologies work, the benefits (safety, mobility, and environmental), and likely timeframe for deployment to overcome barriers to participation and acceptance of C-ITS technologies when introduced more broadly to Queensland's road network.

The campaign is being designed to also assist in laying the ground work for the call for Pilot participants by providing information direct to the Ipswich community. With greater understanding, it is more likely participants would be more accepting of the changes to their vehicles and roadside infrastructure experienced during the Pilot

The campaign is expected to run for twelve weeks, and will include a mix of digital and printed assets, including vox pops, infographics, social media quizzes, static images, myth busting content and brand videos. The assets are being developed in a way that maximizes their use amongst road users and internal TMR staff.

Paid social media coming from the TMR Facebook page will be the primary channel of the campaign, allowing for tightly targeted activity to the primary audience residing in and around Ipswich, as well as paid activity allowing access to people across southeast Queensland and the rest of the State.

Social media communication assets will be served sequentially, so as users see a particular asset or message a number of times, they will be moved into the next set to be served the next message in sequence, thereby building understanding over time. This digital strategy allows for testing of different messaging to see which one performs best, and the ability to boost that activity ensuring the best performance against set targets.

Conclusions

Developing a suite of creative assets covering a variety of messages is expected to deliver diverse content frequently, and generate understanding and confidence amongst the target audience. The variety of messaging is also expected to increase the audience's knowledge and understanding of C-ITS. This presentation will provide both campaign strategy and development information