

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments FY 2009 First Half Draft Marketing Campaign Summary

Introduction

FY2009 was welcomed in with continued high Rideshare and Guaranteed Ride Home application activity. Besides high gas prices, several events contributed to this high rate of applications; a direct mail campaign sent out in late June 2008, and two September events which included the launch of the new online ridematching system and Car Free Day.

Transportation issues continued to garner public attention as commuters sought solutions to traffic congestion and high gas prices. As transportation challenges facing the Washington DC commuter figured prominently in the media at the beginning of September, the media looked to Commuter Connections to provide expert analysis and solutions. Commuter Connections brought focus to these issues and the solutions available to commuters at a post-Labor Day press event.

A marketing brief, distributed to network members in August 2008, outlined the blueprint for FY2009 marketing efforts. The strategies behind the FY09 marketing campaign continue to be based on the findings of the 2007 State of the Commute Survey, 2007 GRH Survey Report, and the Commuter Connections Stakeholder Attitudes and Opinions, April 2007. A separate analysis conducted by Odonnell Company looked at the implication of the findings on specific marketing strategies. Specifically, this analysis noted the following findings:

- Driving alone is down to 71 percent; down from 74.1 percent in 2004 and 72.6 percent in 2001.
- All other modes, including train, carpool/vanpool, bus and bike/walk are all up from 2004 levels.
- One in every three reported trips was either avoided entirely or made with an alternative to driving alone.
- Women and men are increasingly equal in their percentage of using alternative transportation.
- The top reasons for using alternative transportation included save money (18%); changed jobs or work hours (18%) and save time (13%).

In continued response to the public focus on transportation issues and following the September 2 press event, Commuter Connections launched its fall campaign, with continued use of creative developed for the spring FY2008 campaign.

Based on performance data gathered during and immediately following the spring campaign in the second half of FY08, the campaign successfully established and reinforced Commuter Connections as a source of solutions for commuting issues. When faced with record high gas prices, commuters turned to Commuter Connections to explore the alternatives. The fall campaign continued to encourage commuters to save time and money by ridesharing. Commuters were also reminded of the service provided by, and the benefits of, the Guaranteed Ride Home program. The fall campaign continued to expand the outreach of the Commuter Connections messages by including a Spanish-speaking radio station in the media mix and by targeting job hunters. As the State of the Commute Survey established, changing jobs or work hours was one of the top reasons offered by respondents for using alternative transportation.

This draft report covers the first half FY2009 Marketing Campaign for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Commuter Connections program. A new campaign is currently in development for launch in the spring of 2009. Details of that campaign will be provided in the second half FY2009 Marketing Campaign Summary.

About Commuter Connections

Commuter Connections is a regional network of transportation organizations coordinated through the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). Commuter Connections offers free services to those who work in the metropolitan Washington area. Major services include ridematching for carpools and vanpools and administration of the Guaranteed Ride Home program. Through its Employer Outreach Representatives, Commuter Connections also helps employers establish commuter benefit programs for their employees, including teleworking.

Organizations represented in the Regional TDM Marketing Group include:

City of Alexandria	ARTMA	Fairfax City
Fairfax County Office of Transportation	National Institutes of Health (NIH)	Mass Transit Administration (MTA)
Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)	Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)	Virginia Department of Transportation Northern Virginia District Office
TYTRAN	VDOT	LINK
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation	Dulles Area Transportation Association (DATA)	Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Virginia Railway Express (VRE)	Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA)	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
Arlington County	MDOT	VPSI

General Services District Department of Loudoun County Office of Administration (GSA) Transportation (DDOT) Transportation Services Maryland State Highway Montgomery County Ride On Montgomery County Commuter Services Administration Montgomery County Rappahannock Area Rappahannock-Rapidan **Development Commission** Regional Commission (RADCO)

Northern Neck Rideshare/PDC

Cornerstones of the Marketing Program

The key products and services that are featured in the marketing program include the Guaranteed Ride Home and Ridematching programs. Both of these programs are critical to growing the regional database and making it easier for commuters to find and maintain shared ride arrangements. Other areas included in marketing outreach include transit, bicycling and teleworking.

The objectives of the program include the following:

- Create a platform which promotes all network products and services individually while reinforcing the support provided by the umbrella program of Commuter Connections.
- Raise awareness of the Commuter Connections network and position the group as the region's first resource for alternatives to driving alone.
- Promote awareness of Ridematching services among commuters and increase applications for the program.
- Promote awareness of the Guaranteed Ride Home service among commuters and increase applications for the program.

Messaging Strategy

The first half of FY2009 reinforced the "preservation" theme delivered in the spring FY2008 campaign. The Rideshare messages emphasized "preservation"; commuters can preserve their think time, productivity, their pocket money and their balance if they chose to rideshare.

The Guaranteed Ride Home program noted the peace of mind provided by knowing that you can get home in the event of an emergency, whether it is a sick child, an unexpected family emergency, personal illness, or even unscheduled overtime. The GRH program removes the barrier that many have to sharing the ride; that an unexpected event requires the instant availability of a car to get home.

Target Market

The overall target audience for the communication is based on research findings from Commuter Connections and was:

- Commuters between 25-54 years old
- Caucasian (65%) and African-American (20%)
- \$60,000+ annual household income
- Commute more than 20 miles / 30 minutes
- Live in Virginia (65%) or Maryland (33%); work in D.C. (49%) or Virginia (34%)
- Work for employers with 250+ employees (68%)
- Work for federal agencies (54%) and private sector companies (30%)
- Professional (40%), Executive/managerial (19%) and administrative (18%)

Fall 2009 Media Flowchart

FALL 2009 MEDIA FLOWCHART																					
MEDIA	AU	JG			SEP OCT NOV			DEC			NET										
	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	TOTAL
RADIO																					
CarFree Day																					\$65,327
GRH																					\$172,416
Rideshare																					\$172,416
Total Radio																					\$344,833
TXT MSG																					\$500
TRANSIT SIGNS																					\$40,000
INTERNET																					\$45,000
CONTINGENCY																					\$10,000
TOTAL																					\$505,660

GRH Only
Rideshare Only
GRH/RS
Car Free Day

Media Objectives: Guaranteed Ride Home

The Guaranteed Ride Home program campaign utilized a mix of proven media avenues as well as non-traditional media to raise GRH awareness among commuters and increase applications for this program. Guaranteed Ride Home leverages alternative transportation by removing one of the perceived barriers, how to get home in case of an emergency.

Target market (based on Commuter Connections research findings):

- 35-54 years old, secondarily 25-54
- Caucasian (65%) and African-American (21%)
- \$60,000+ annual household income
- Commute of more than 30 miles / 45 minutes
- Live in Virginia (64%) or Maryland (34%), with a special emphasis on Prince William (20%) and Fairfax Counties (18%); work in D.C (60%) and Virginia (30%)

Geographic Targeting

Washington D.C. DMA

GRH Fall Budget	COG Cost	Gross Dollars
Radio	\$172,416	\$202,842
Internet Including earned media with radio partners	\$22,500	\$26,471
Bus Shelters	\$20,000	\$23,529
Contingency	\$5,000	\$5,882
Total Budget	\$219,916	\$258,724

Media Objectives: Rideshare

The campaign to promote the Rideshare program uses a mix of traditional and non-traditional approaches to maintain awareness among commuters and increase applications for this program.

Target market (based on Commuter Connections research findings):

- 35-54 years old, secondarily 25-54
- Caucasian (65%) and African-American (20%)
- \$60,000+ annual household income
- Commute of more than 20 miles / 30 minutes
- Work for employers with 250+ employees
- Live in Virginia (64%) or Maryland (33%); work in D.C (49%) or Virginia (34%)
- Work for federal agencies (54%) and private sector (30%)
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Brand Character

The Commuter Connections network wishes to be perceived as a network of organizations working to improve individuals' commutes. Through Commuter Connections' new online ridematching system, commuters who create an account will be provided with mapped out commute routes and options and will be given direct access to other commuters who are looking to rideshare. As more people share the ride to work, they collectively affect the commute in a positive manner for the region through less traffic congestion and cleaner air.

Radio

During the fall campaign, radio was used as an anchor medium for the campaign with a broad mix of radio stations. The campaign reached out to Spanish-speaking commuters with spots running on WLZL, El Zol. In total, 10 D.C.-focused stations and 5 exurban stations were used during the campaign.

The radio campaign had an 87 percent reach with a 29.1 frequency, delivering 49,908,000 impressions in the Adult 35-54 group over an 8 week period. The following radio stations were used for the campaign:

WAFY (Key 103.1FM)	WFRE (99.9 Free Country, Frederick)	WRQX (Mix 107.3FM)
WASH (Soft Rock 97.1FM)	WLZL (EI Zol, 99.1FM)	WSMD (Star 98.3FM Mechanicsburg)
WBIG (BIG 100 100.3FM)	WMAL (News/Talk 630AM)	WTGB (94.7 The Globe)
WBQB (B101.5FM Fredericksburg)	WMMJ (102.3FM Urban AC)	WTOP (News/Talk 103.5FM)
WFLS (93.3FM Real Country, Fredericksburg)	WPGC (Urban AC)	WWDC (DC101)

Three radio scripts delivering the "Preservation" messages of the Guaranteed Ride Home and Rideshare campaigns were rotated throughout the campaign; 'Preserve your peace of mind', 'Preserve your productivity', and 'Preserve your pocket money'. El Zol provided Spanish translations of one Ridesharing spot ("Saving Gas") and one Guaranteed Ride Home spot ("Great Mom").

Guaranteed Ride Home::60—"GREAT MOM"

Premise: a happy new carpooler who appreciates the reliability of her new commute receives news that her daughter has a fever and must be picked up at school right away. She doesn't panic; she calls Commuter Connections and gets a Guaranteed Ride Home. She realizes with this incident that she can rideshare and still be the great mom that she wants to be.

Guaranteed Ride Home::60—"SOLUTION"

A commuter is talking to the audience from his carpool, describing the great bunch of people who normally share the same work schedule and leave promptly at 5:30 each evening. The day before, however, his boss told him that a deadline had been moved up and he had to work later. Rather than lose his cool, he called Commuter Connections and got his free Guaranteed Ride Home. He now knows that he does not have to choose between getting his work done and getting a ride home.

Ridesharing::60—SAVING GAS

A man is being interviewed about his commute, and complains about the amount of money he was spending on gasoline, spending hundreds of dollars each month and driving up the mileage on his car. Instead of continuing to pay too much or quitting his job, he decided to join Commuter Connections, where they matched him up with people who live and work near him. Taking turns driving saves him a lot of money on gas. He now preserves his pocket money and has made some new commuting buddies.

Value Added Promotions

For the fall campaign, all radio stations were asked to support Commuter Connections' Rideshare Tuesday campaign. Attention was drawn to the benefits of ridesharing through on-air mentions of Tuesday as the day to consider commute alternatives.

Radio stations were asked that any additional free air time offered as part of the media buy, be timed for Mondays and Tuesdays to draw listeners' attention to Rideshare Tuesday. Copy was provided to radio stations to urge listeners to go online to www.commuterconnections.org to find someone to share the ride or to consider their other commute options. The copy provided for this promotion also highlighted some of the benefits of the new online ride-matching software.

In addition to the on-air mentions, 3 radio stations provided links to the Commuter Connections website from their website. WMAL ran an "Ultimate Rideshare to the Ultimate Game" promotion offering 2 tickets to the Washington Redskins vs. Dallas Cowboys game with "rideshare" transportation via a limousine. WLZL interviewed Commuter Connections for their "Tu Familia Zol" program.

A logo was designed for the Rideshare Tuesday campaign and Commuter Connections members were asked to place the logo on their websites to support the campaign.



Transit Shelter Advertising

Most commuters travel the same route every day, making it likely that they are viewing the same signs on bus shelters as they drive by. This makes bus shelter advertising an affordable and effective means of providing frequency of message. A mix of bus shelters were targeted for the fall campaign. Two shelters near a Metro stop were selected to display the Guaranteed Ride Home message to remind commuters who have selected public transportation for their commute of the Guaranteed Ride Home safety net, should they need it. Three additional shelters along a major commute route were selected to deliver the Rideshare message to commuters who are traveling to work by car. During the fall campaign, transit signage was placed at the following locations:

- Rideshare locations:
 - Connecticut Ave 29 ft N/ O Nebraska Ave NW WS
 - EB "P" St 10 ft W/ O 21st St NW SS
 - NB Georgia Av 10 ft S/ O Tuckerman St NW ES
- Guaranteed Ride Home locations:
 - EB "H" St 10 ft W/ O 13th St NW SS
 - SB 11th St 10 ft N/ O "E" St NW WS



Internet Advertising

Internet advertising during the fall campaign included rotating sizes of banner ads served to specified websites and geo-targeted to IP addresses in the Washington DC DMA. The placements provided a 35 percent reach, 13.7 frequency and 18,103,100 impressions in the Adult 35-54 market.

As reported in the 2007 State of the Commute Survey, 18% of respondents offered changing jobs or work hours as a top reason for using alternative transportation. Major job websites were targeted for the fall campaign as well as Washington newspaper and television websites.

The following sites are being used in the campaign:

- Careerbuilder.com
- Monster.com
- Yahoo! hotjobs.com
- Washington Post
- Washington Times
- NBC4
- iii-interactive.com run-of-network geo-targeted by IP address

Three ad sizes, 160x600, 300x250, and 720x300, were used for the campaign. One Rideshare and one Guaranteed Ride Home ad were provided in each size with equal rotation of both ads. Statistics were collected throughout the campaign allowing for ad placement optimization. Based on impressions delivered and CTR, ad sizes and site placement were adjusted to provide optimal performance.



Special Events

September 2 Press Event

A press event launching Commuter Connections new online ridematching system was held on September 2 at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). With the launch of the new system, commuters are provided with direct access, for the first time, to people that live and work near them and want to join carpools and vanpools. This direct access further helps residents of Maryland, D.C., and Virginia, cope with traffic congestion and fluctuating gas prices by supplying them with transportation alternatives to solo driving. Speaking at the event were Transportation Planning Board (TPB) dignitaries including Phil Mendelson, D.C. Council Member At-Large and TPB Chairman, Charles A. Jenkins, Frederick County Commissioner and Vice Chairman of the TPB from Maryland, and David Snyder, Falls Church Council Member and Vice Chairman of the TPB from Virginia.

The press event was held on the day AAA calls "Terrible Traffic Tuesday". The Tuesday following Labor Day is generally marked by surging traffic levels at the end of the traditional low levels of the summer. Mahlon G. (Lon) Anderson, AAA Mid-Atlantic's Director of Public and Government Affairs, speaking at the event, noted that skyrocketing gas prices and worsening traffic congestion in the Washington metro area were forcing some commuters to seek alternatives this year.

Officials also announced the metropolitan Washington's first-time region-wide participation in Car Free Day, a worldwide event on September 22 that encouraged commuters to pledge to "uncar" for a day. Transportation officials expressed hope that commuters who took part in Car Free Day would make a permanent or at least part-time switch to alternative transportation.







The press event was well covered by the media with articles appearing in DC newspapers and stories carried on radio and television stations. Among the media outlets picking up the story were the following:

Washington Post "Updated Ride-Matching Service Launches"

Frederick News Post "Network launches new carpool site"

Examiner.com "DC area unveils revamped ride-sharing Site"

WTOP "D.C. area unveils revamped ride-sharing site"

WAMU "Traffic Could Be Slow Going This Fall"

WNCT "Area officials unveil revamped ride-sharing site"

NBC4

Forbes.com

FOX 5

Car Free Day

Metropolitan Washington participated for the first-time in a region-wide celebration of Car Free Day, a worldwide event on September 22 to encourage commuters to pledge to "uncar" for a day. Started in 2000, Car Free Day now counts 1,500 participating cities in 40 countries, where commuters pledge to leave their car at home for the day, and ride a train, bus, bicycle, subway, telework, or walk to work. People also could go "car lite" by carpooling or vanpooling.

Radio, posters, bus kings and queens, and bus shelter ads were created to bring attention to this event and drive the public to the DDOT-sponsored website, www.carfreemetrodc.com, to make a pledge to go car free. Text messaging was used to encourage people who already made a pledge to ask family, friends, and colleagues to join them in going car free for the day. Links were provided from the website to the new online ride-matching system, transit info and itineraries for WMATA and other systems. The total number of pledges received for this inaugural event was 5,445. Printing postage and mail house costs for posters, bus sides and buttons was \$6,094.



A :60 second radio spot was created for Car Free Day to encourage listeners to make the pledge to "Uncar" on September 22 by going to www.carfreemetrodc.com.

Car Free Day::60—POUNDAGE

Two women discuss how good one of them is looking. Her secret is having shed a ton of weight by going car free. By leaving her car at home, she was able to get rid of her high gas bills and stress, and it was good for the environment.

Four radio stations were selected to run the Car Free Day spots. The stations used were the following:

WASH (Soft Rock 97.1FM) WRQX (Mix 107.3FM)

WBIG (BIG 100 100.3FM) WTGB (94.7 The Globe)

Following in the spirit of the event, WASH and WBIG ran a Car Free Day promotion with a bicycle offered as a giveaway. WRQX had a \$100 SmarTrip card on offer as part of their Car Free Day promotion. Additional free on-air mentions were provided by WTGB.

Press coverage for Metropolitan Washington's first Car Free Day included the following:

Washington Post "Who Needs a Car?"

Express Night Out "An End to Car Trouble: Car Free Day"

WJLA "Officials Ask Commuters to Go 'Car Free' for One Day"

FOX 5 "DC Officials Supporting Monday 'Car-Free DC' Events"

WTOP "DC officials promote 'Car Free' events for Monday"

WUSA 9 "Monday Is the Day to Live 'Car Free"

Bike to Work Day 2009 Sponsorship Drive

The drive for sponsors for Bike to Work Day 2009 started at the beginning of October. The success of the sponsorship drive will involve forging key partnerships with newly identified prospects and expanding existing sponsor relationships. A one-page "proof of value" report on the more measurable benefits of sponsorship has been produced to help re-sign previous sponsors as well as to attract new ones. In addition, opportunities to partner with "green" and health organizations that promote commute alternatives have been identified and will be pursued. The BTWD sponsorship drive will continue to January 2009.

The 2009 Bike to Work Day logo was created to support the BTWD sponsorship drive. The rest of the BTWD creative will be developed over the next few months.



Twelfth Annual Employer Recognition Awards

The Commuter Connections Annual Employer Recognition Awards recognize employers who voluntarily initiate worksite commute programs to assist their employees. Winners and nominees will be honored at an awards ceremony in June 2009. An application for nominations was developed and is being distributed for the 2009 awards. The application form is also available electronically at www.commuterconnections.org. Printing, postage and mail house costs were \$1,872.



Commuter Connections Newsletter and Federal ETC Insert

Summer and Fall editions of *Commuter Connections*, were produced during the first half of FY2009. The six page 4-color newsletter is distributed to approximately 5,000 employers and mailed quarterly. It is also placed in PDF format on the Commuter Connections web site. Newsletters are also sent to federal agencies via GSA along with a special Federal ETC Insert. A PDF of the insert is also placed online at www.federaletc.org.



Fort Belvoir Eagle Print Ad

The Fort Belvoir army base, located in Virginia, has 20,000 commuters traveling to the base daily. As part of BRAC realignment, Fort Belvoir will experience the largest gain of any installation over the next three years with an additional 19,000 personnel heading there. It is located near the heavily traveled Route 1 and I-95 corridors. In order to encourage Fort Belvoir personnel to consider ridesharing, a special half page color ad was created for the Fort Belvoir *Eagle*'s special transportation section at a cost of \$550.



Work Schedule Alternatives Brochure

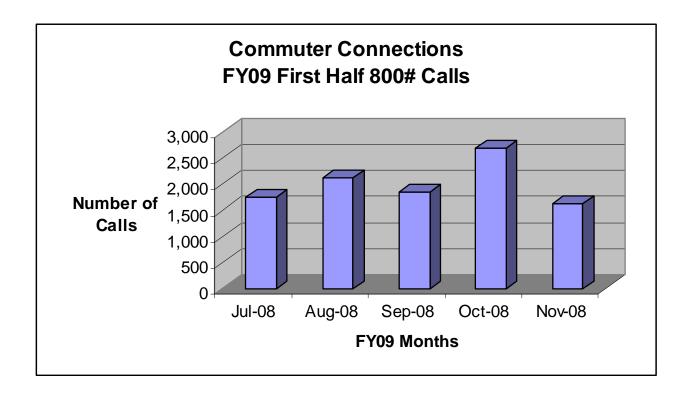
As part of Commuter Connections' continued outreach and support of employers, the Work Schedule Alternatives brochure was updated to the same look and feel as the Sales Kit brochures.



Web Visits

FY08		FY09			
Month	Web Visits	Month	Web Visits	+/-	+/- %
Jul-07	8,184	Jul-08	10,063	1,879	22.96%
Aug-07	5,377	Aug-08	14,710	9,333	173.57%
Sep-07	7,106	Sep-08	11,302	4,196	59.05%
Oct-07	8,280	Oct-08	8,653	373	4.50%
Nov-07	8,020	Nov-08	7,093	-927	-11.56%
Dec-07		Dec-08			
	36,967		51,821	14,854	40.18%

Phone Calls



Rideshare Applications

FY08	Rideshare	FY09	Rideshare		
Month	Applications	Month	Applications	+/-	+/- %
Jul-07	859	Jul-08	1,213	354	41.21%
Aug-07	632	Aug-08	880	248	39.24%
Sep-07	586	Sep-08	1,214	628	107.17%
Oct-07	678	Oct-08	960	282	41.59%
Nov-07		Nov-08			
Dec-07		Dec-08			
	2,755		4,267	1,512	54.88%

GRH Applications

FY08	GRH	FY09	GRH		
Month	Applications	Month	Applications	+/-	+/- %
Jul-07	976	Jul-08	1,203	227	23.26%
Aug-07	697	Aug-08	700	3	0.43%
Sep-07	574	Sep-08	626	52	9.06%
Oct-07	571	Oct-08	495	-76	-13.31%
Nov-07		Nov-08			
Dec-07		Dec-08			
	2,818		3,024	206	7.31%