

Smart Commute's Carpool Week February 6-12, 2012

Situation

Carpool Week is a one-week, annual campaign to promote carpooling and encourage use of CarpoolZone.ca - a free, easy-to-use, online ride-matching service offered by Smart Commute. This year, Carpool Week is scheduled for February 6 -12 (Monday to Sunday).

Goal(s):

Drive traffic to CarpoolZone.ca and increase the number of registered employers, commuters and carpools within the GTHA.

Strategy

Carpool Week communications and promotional activities will be targeted to commuters who presently choose to drive alone, encouraging them to try carpooling by touting its many benefits (e.g. stress reduction, cost savings, environmental benefits). We will convey these messages using real-life testimonials from Smart Commute participants.

Objectives

- Increase the level of awareness about Smart Commute and Carpool Week
- Increase the number of active users registered on CarpoolZone.ca
- Increase the number of carpools registered on CarpoolZone.ca
- Recognize and pay tribute to those who already carpool

Audiences

- Potential Smart Commute members (i.e. commuters in the GTHA who drive to work alone)
- Current Smart Commute members (employers and employees)
- GO Transit passengers
- General public
- Media
- Environmental government & stakeholder agencies

Key Messages –

Primary Messages

- If you do need to drive to work, consider carpooling or ride sharing.
- Register an account on CarpoolZone.ca and start a carpool. CarpoolZone.ca is a free, easy-to-use, online ride-matching service offered by Smart Commute that makes it easy to find driving buddies.
- There are many benefits to carpooling:
 - Every carpool takes at least one car off the road, which helps reduce gridlock and improves air quality.
 - There is improved work-life balance and reduced stress through possible time savings achieved through faster trips using HOV lanes.
 - Significant cost savings by sharing gas, parking and toll road costs, and less wear and tear on your personal vehicle.

Secondary Messages

- If you are already registered with CarpoolZone.ca and are currently carpooling, share your stories so that others can relate to and benefit from your experiences.
- Smart Commute is an initiative of Metrolinx, and the municipalities in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, that works with employers to improve commuting options for their employees.
 - Smart Commute helps employers and commuters in the GTHA explore different commuting options like carpooling, cycling and transit.
 - To date, more than 204 employers with 524,000 employees have signed on and are designated as Smart Commute workplaces.

Evaluation

Quantitative and qualitative measures to determine whether communication objectives were achieved:

- Increased web traffic to CarpoolZone.ca
- Increased uptake in registrations on CarpoolZone.ca – individuals, employers and carpools
- Positive media coverage and impressions about Carpool Week, Smart Commute and carpooling in the GTHA

Proposed Tactics:

<i>Medium</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timing</i>
COMMUNICATIONS & PR			
Earned Media	News release • Focus on benefits carpoolers experience – cost savings, stress reduction – to encourage more carpooling • Include testimonials from CarpoolZone users	Metrolinx & Smart Commute	Issue on Feb. 6
	Interview Opportunity • With CarpoolZone success stories	Metrolinx & Smart Commute	Feb. 6 – 10
Website(s)	CarpoolZone.ca will be the main focal point - promotions will drive traffic there. Information on the landing page will prompt people interested in carpooling to register. Will also include a link to savings calculation tool.	Smart Commute	Carpool Week update launches Jan. 30
	Metrolinx.com will be secondary point of promotion with banner feature on the homepage with link to CarpoolZone.ca	Metrolinx	Feb. 1 –10
	GOtransit.com – messaging around carpooling to the GO	GO Transit	Feb. 1 - 10

	Train station and link to CarpoolZone.ca		
Social Media	Facebook & Twitter - Create Carpool Week FB Event; encourage people to share their experiences, including how much money they have saved and how they spent those savings - Tweet tips and tricks for first-time carpoolers, stats, savings Smart Commute Blog - Carpooling tips	Smart Commute, Metrolinx, GO Transit	Jan. 30 – Feb. 10
GO Transit	Messaging on electronic PINS boards	GO Transit	Jan. 30 – Feb. 10
	E-News and SMS messages	GO Transit	Jan. 30 – Feb. 10
MTO Highway Message Boards	Month and week specific messaging re: carpooling	Metrolinx, via MTO	February: carpooling message; Feb. 6 – 10: Carpool Week-specific message
PAID MEDIA			
Radio Tags	10-second Carpool Week promotional tag lead-ins to traffic reports	Metrolinx	Jan. 30 – Feb. 10
Proposed station: (depending upon availability) 680 News (2 weeks) - Canadian Traffic Network (1 week) (CFMJ, CFNYFM, CILQFM, CINGFM, CJRTFM, CFMZ+, CFRB, CKFMFM, CHBMFM, CIDCFM)		Costs	Total Radio Costs
		\$9,573.50	\$14,398.60
		\$4,825.10	
Employer Recognition Ad	Advertisement in Toronto Star recognizing a SmartCommute employer member for outstanding employee carpool program and overall employee participation	ZenithOptimedia, (AOR), to procure ad space on behalf of SmartCommute	To appear on Feb. 6
Print ad: Toronto Star, ½ page, 4-colour		Cost	Total Print Ad Cost
		\$8,825.00	\$8,825.00