

Niall Gardiner

Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership (Tactran), Perth , UK

Craig Nelson

Steer Davies Gleave, Londn, UK

Speaker Qualifications



Niall Gardiner

Niall Gardiner has a Civil Engineering degree, a Masters in Transportation Engineering and is a member of The Institution of Civil Engineers. He has twenty three years Local Government transportation experience, during which he has worked on a number of innovative travel information projects. He is Tactran's Projects Manager, leading on rail, park and ride, interchange and travel information projects and has an interest in making public transport accessible through good design and information provision. Niall has presented at events including STAR, TPM and most recently at a Land-use and Transport Integration in Scotland (LATIS) national seminar.



Craig Nelson

Dr. Craig Nelson has a Masters degree in Geography and a PhD in transport policy. He has worked in transport technology for the past six years, during which he has developed a number of journey planning and passenger information concepts for the web and mobile phone. He leads on journey planning and web development at Steer Davies Gleave and has an interest in using crowd sourced information to drive dynamic passenger information solutions. Craig presented the keynote at the 2010 IIID Expert Forum which focused on dynamic journey planning.

The sound of the crowd - how social media can complement traditional information systems

Twitter and Facebook, are becoming increasingly important sources of real time information. The use of Twitter during the recent events in Egypt demonstrates the potential to use the public to 'crowd source' real time information via mobile devices. Similarly, the potential to use social media to 'crowd source' travel information updates is huge, especially during periods of disruption when more traditional transport information systems cannot cope. The people 'on the ground' have a unique perspective on the issues, providing an immediate and unbiased perspective. Steer Davies Gleave and Tactran (Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership) have delivered an innovative social media project that centred on distributing travel information via Twitter and Facebook.

Social media was introduced to the existing regional multimodal transport information website (TactranConnect), in order to provide timely transport updates, to 'share' journey plan results and to establish two-way communications between Tactran and the travelling public. The goal was to 'recruit' regular travellers who would provide the site with timely updates. Crowd sourced information was especially useful during periods of traffic disruption due to heavy winter snow. Tactran also built up its user base by using a social media based competition to drive traffic to the site, and many of the entrants continue to regularly use the website.

This presentation will provide an overview of the results, how the perception of real time transport information was challenged and the long term goals of the project. Where possible, the presentation will show TactranConnect's social media elements working in real time and examples of how it was used during periods of heavy snow.