



Traveler Information Showcase 1996*Atlanta

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Atlanta Showcase Extends Demonstration Period Amid Public Acclaim for Project

Originally conceived to introduce the public to traveler information technologies and services, the Atlanta Showcase has just concluded the first phase of its demonstration period to decidedly favorable reviews. Based on public, industry and international interest, the Federal Highway Administration, which has sponsored the project, has extended the Showcase beyond its initial June through September run by an additional five months through February 1997.

'We are excited by the opportunity to continue Showcase operations,' said Project Manager Jerry Pittenger of Battelle. 'This time will be spent demonstrating the technologies to people from all walks of life and exposing them to traveler information systems that are available today.'

To date, nearly 850 users of the Showcase systems have returned survey questionnaires or called the project hotline to register their comments on their experiences with the five technologies -- cable television, in-vehicle navigation systems, personal communications devices, interactive television and an Internet home page. The respondents reported on how often they accessed the traveler information, what affect it had on their travel behavior and what aspects of each technology they found particularly beneficial.

Among the findings:

- A majority of respondents clearly liked the cable television programming, which provided the information they were looking for accurately in an easily understandable format;
- About 75 percent of the respondents found the in-vehicle navigation technology helpful, and 65 percent said they would consider purchasing such a system for their own vehicle;
- About 75 percent of the respondents who used the Internet site found its information useful, while 45 percent said they visited the site more than once;
- About 35 percent of the respondents who tested the personal communications devices said they would consider purchasing such a device for personal usage;
- During the Olympic period, 48 percent of the usage of the Interactive Channel by guests at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Ravinia, was for the Showcase traffic speed, highway incident and public transit information.

The Showcase will continue to operate until the end of February with several modifications in the size and the scope of the project. The in-vehicle navigation systems, personal communications devices and the interactive television technologies will be available to smaller, more narrowly focused audiences than they were during the first four months of the project.



'We have decided to extend the Showcase based on the positive feedback we received from the public thus far,' said Project Director Felton Rutledge of the Federal Highway Administration. 'This will provide us with the opportunity to continue to demonstrate the capabilities of these systems to a broader segment of the local business community, transportation officials from other states and countries and other groups interested in the deployment of ITS technologies.'