



Utah Clears The Air

Utah, known for its natural diversity, is home to features ranging from arid deserts with sand dunes to thriving pine forests in mountain valleys. One of Utah's defining characteristics is the variety of its terrain. At the western base of the Wasatch Range is the Wasatch Front, a series of valleys and basins that are home to the most populous parts of the state. This area includes Salt Lake City and Provo as well as nearly 75 percent of the state's population.

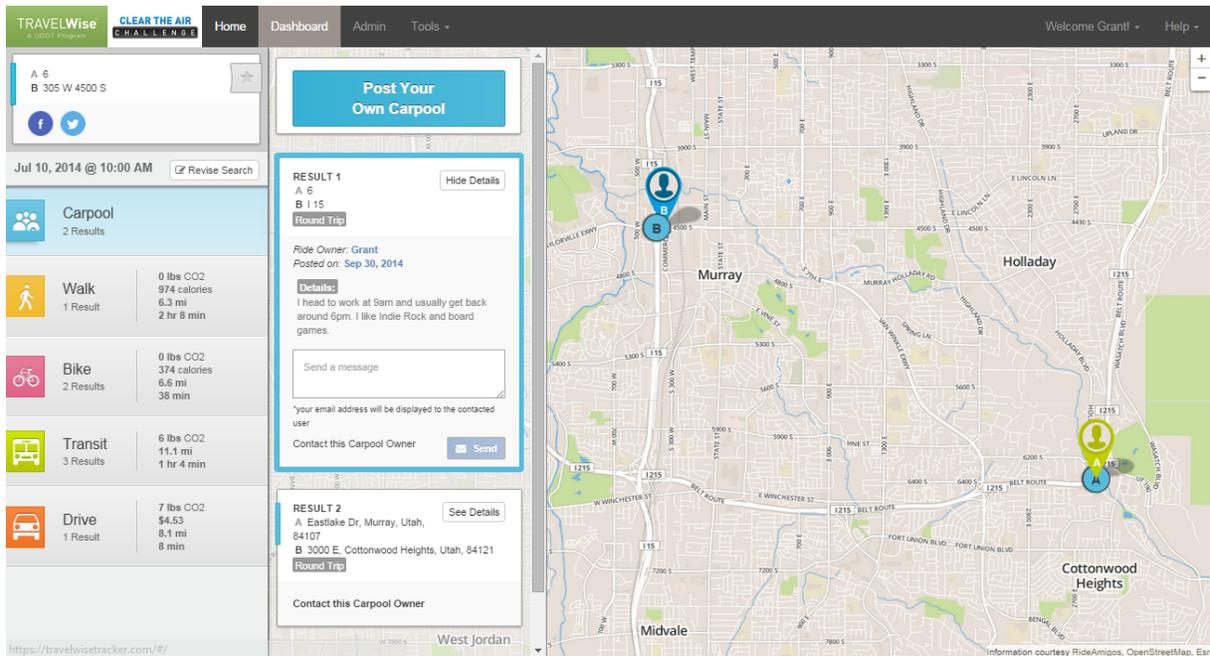
Due in part to its unique terrain, Utah's low basins and valleys experience poor air quality on occasions during winter and summer seasons. Research done by the Utah Department of Air Quality shows that more than 50 percent of the particulate matter in Utah's air comes from vehicle emissions. An average Utah driver travels 298 miles in approximately 60 trips per week, making traffic reduction amongst the best ways to improve air-quality. To compound the problem, Utah's population is consistently one of the fastest growing in the United States. With such population growth (and therefore exponentially more cars on the roads), there is obvious stress on the state's environment, in particular to Utah's air-quality.

In 2008, Salt Lake City, in partnership with the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) organized the annual Clear The Air Challenge to reduce energy consumption, optimize mobility and improve air-quality, which ultimately improves the quality of life in Utah. In 2013 the Salt Lake Chamber assumed responsibility for the administration of the Clear the Air Challenge, and runs the program in partnership with UDOT.

In 2014, the Salt Lake Chamber and UDOT made a strategic decision and chose RideAmigos Transport Demand Management (TDM) SaaS platform to help them grow the impact of the Challenge. RideAmigos gave the challenge's organizers the ability to monitor, manage, and organize various competitions and provide incentives and prizes to nudge people to make clever, more efficient, and environmentally friendly choices.

During the 2014 challenge, the partner organizations encouraged citizens to use the RideAmigos platform, which was available on cleartheairchallenge.org. The 6800 people who used the platform during this time, searched for real time commute information, directions, and alternate transportation options including biking, walking, and carpooling. Users were able to create open and closed networks for carpooling and sharing rides while tracking all their trips.

In total, participants saved more than \$750,000 dollars in gas and increased total number of calories burned by 15,933,401 when they biked or walked instead of driving. In addition to helping participants save money and burn more calories, the RideAmigos interface helped make transportation smarter and more effective, and had the added positive externalities of reduced traffic and less congestion with a total of 2,199,978 miles logged on alternative transport modes, eliminating 651 tons of CO2 emissions.



RideAmigos - Travelwise Trip Planner with Transit Results:

Clear the Air participants could easily evaluate green commuting options from finding carpools to walking and public transit.

Additionally, through ArcGIS Online’s geocoding services, RideAmigos delivered accurate location search results that were in close geographic proximity to the user to ensure they would find resources relevant to them. ArcGIS Online also provided unique data analysis and tools to illustrate commuting behavior and traffic patterns. ArcGIS Online Network Analyst services delivered clear driving directions.

By supporting and incentivizing alternative transportation options, Utah Department of Transportation and the Salt Lake Chamber spurred a variety of social, economic, health and environmental benefits throughout the region that turned Utah’s investment in transportation management into one of the most successful programs in America.

For more information, please contact: Prachi Vakharia (Prachi@RideAmigos.com).

Sources

TravelWise Tracker - <https://travelwisetracker.com/#/challenges/default>

TravelWise Utah - <http://www.travelwise.utah.gov>

Clear The Air Challenge - <http://cleartheairchallenge.org>