Communications for Accelerating Adoption of Innovation

Promoting and facilitating knowledge transfer to ensure that Caltrans research results are accessible for use in practical processes

WHAT IS THE NEED?

Economic, political, environmental and other pressures are making it harder than ever to deliver safe, efficient, effective surface transportation. Caltrans Division of Research, Innovation and System Information (DRISI) is producing valuable research results that can help our public agencies do their jobs better, build and maintain our infrastructure over a longer lifespan at a lower cost, manage our resources more efficiently, operate our transportation systems and work zones more safely, and reduce congestion and delay to the public.

However, convincing an agency to adopt a new technology or process is challenging, even when the research indicates that the new technology or new process has obvious advantages over whatever technology or process it is intended to replace.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Written communications, in both print and electronic formats, remains a mainstay of the technology transfer process. Tech Transfer publications are produced jointly by subject matter experts who identify timely, relevant topics and provide quality content and technical oversight, and communications and graphic design professionals who understand the audience and how to use the media effectively.

Communications and marketing specialists and library and information professionals ensure that those publications, as well as the research final reports, reach their target audiences and that they are accessible internationally and adequately archived.

Tech Transfer training and workshops further support technology transfer goals by expanding the communication and research skills and abilities of Caltrans staff through internal training workshops and fostering communication in open forums with other agencies and stakeholders.

WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

The objective is to achieve successful technology transfer by moving from awareness, to a decision to adopt, and ultimately to implementation, which takes sustained and multi-pronged effort. This project supports that effort.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

The project provides these following benefits:

• Communicates the progress of research at the beginning of a research project, and the results of research at the end of a research project.
• Distributes copies of research final reports from Caltrans sponsored research projects to California’s depository libraries. UC Berkeley’s and Northwestern University’s transportation libraries, the National Transportation Library, The Library of Congress, and the National Technical Information Service.
• Enters Caltrans sponsored research publications into the international TRID database and California and national electronic repositories.
• Provides interactive forums where potential adopters can learn about transportation innovation, see it in action, and discuss it and its application with colleagues and experts.

This project supports deployment and the widespread adoption of the innovations and research results from Caltrans sponsored research by agencies statewide through communications, training, and technical assistance.

WHAT IS THE PROGRESS TO DATE?

During the previous contract, Tech Transfer has:

• produced 157 Research Results: 38 for research tasks ending in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011/12; 44 for FY 2012/13; 35 for FY 2013/14, and 40 for FY 2014/15
• produced the DRISI Annual Research Program Highlights for FY 2011/12, FY 2012/13, FY 2013/14, and 2014/15
• distributed 176 research final reports
• processed 749 publications into TRID and the electronic repositories, and
• delivered eight workshops.

Work currently underway includes the 2017 Transportation Planning Conference to be held in late Winter/Early Spring 2017, Section 500 federal brochure, the State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC), and continuing to distribute and catalog publications.
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