

InfrastructureUSA

Guest on THE INFRA BLOG

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Conversation with Steve Anderson, Managing Director, InfrastructureUSA

***Transit Trends*: Engaging in the Future of Mobility**

Transit Trends is an online-based show that moovel launched about a year ago, so early 2016. And I am part of the brand marketing team at moovel, formerly RideScout. We launched this last year, and it was born out of an idea to engage in the future of mobility, what the industry is talking about, what cities are talking about, what transit wonks and nerds are talking about, and that was obviously something we were interested in. We're not plugging the company—we were never plugging RideScout or moovel—this really is out of a genuine interest in the industry.

Bringing New Voices into the Mobility Conversation

We weren't sure if this was going to speak to sort of average "Joe Schmo," which we want it to because mobility—and transportation—is becoming common conversation. It's no longer just part of conversation among experts in transportation or mobility or infrastructure. What we found, though, was one of our audiences that came out of this was early transportation planners. We had, actually, a student from the University of Colorado at Boulder who came up and they said their professor was playing it in class. I think we keep the show so that it could be interesting for my mom to watch, but also can still be interesting for someone who is in the industry to watch, because we know—and I know, as a former traffic anchor—people love to talk about transportation. They love to talk about traffic. If you check out some of the comments, it's a place for people go to talk about these various topics and for us to engage in either our users or our clients or industry experts or, like we said, students. So it's a platform for people to engage in this conversation and learn about what's trending in transportation.

Limits to Engagement

Until it's in your face, I think most people go about their daily lives not really thinking, "Oh I live in Austin, how did this happen, how did Austin happen?" Not everyone really thinks about it until you have to deal with it, like there's a pothole or your train is shut down or you want to do renovations on your house. It's very complex. How did we get to this place where so many people are forced to drive their car by themselves? It's over many, many decades of planning that really could have been done a lot better. You're seeing this turn right now of more people being engaged. People are getting engaged on a more political level as far as those codes and the planning out of a new road; but at the same time, I still don't think the average person is necessarily going to engage with highway planning projects. Do people really notice what part of their lives is really going towards infrastructure? It's not this sexy thing that really gets people going, but it's so vitally important.

Success is Getting People to Think

You go to a dealership and they're not really selling you electric vehicles; you really have to go out and seek it, and I thought it was so interesting that on the Super Bowl, there was an electric vehicle ad. I was like, "Ok, well maybe this is starting to change and we're going to start seeing electric vehicle ads." But until it's in their face, until it's so hard to get on the freeway and get to work, we're creatures of habit. Our very first episode of transit trends was on the "casual

carpool.” I’d never lived in a city with a casual carpool concept, and I saw it and I was like, “let’s do a story on it.” Maybe discussing this on a platform like YouTube where anyone can come across this, maybe it gets people thinking. I try to keep the writing and the way we talk about things on a very relatable level so that if my mom were to come across that show on YouTube she may watch it and it may get her thinking: “You know, maybe there is someone I can find a carpool with,” or “You know, maybe I will check out that BCycle.” It takes someone being frustrated by their situation and then seeing something that interests them to try something new, or hearing about their friend trying something new. If *Transit Trends* causes people to do that, that’s what I would consider winning with *Transit Trends*.

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