





Bike Happening

2011

 **University**
Cracow University of Technology
Country
Poland

Location 
Urban centre
Size 
10,000-20,000
Mobility Organizational Structure 
None

Summary

'The Bike Happening' was organised as a means of promoting cycling among employees and students of the University. The second important issue tackled by the event was concerned with raising awareness on CO2 emissions and ways of reducing them. Research, via a questionnaire, was carried out during the event in order to gauge people's readiness to change from their present mode of transport to cycling. The Bike Happening was organised within the framework of the POWER Programme and the TraCit project.

Aims

- Change the perception of employees and students of the University on bicycle travel and propagate it as a modern and environmentally friendly mobility option.
- Raise awareness among employees and students of the University concerning CO2 emissions deriving from transport, their negative impact and the possibility of their reduction.
- Learning more about those factors that could influence changing one's present transport mode to cycling.

Stakeholders

Students and employees of the University
Kraków Miastem Rowerów (bike related organization) – informational and promotional activities, participation in debate
Bike One, the city bike rental operator – promotional activities, free tickets for participants and winners in competitions
TWR - free of charge maintenance point to repair bikes
Krakow Police – marking bikes to protect them from theft

Background

The University campuses are located in different city districts and the largest one, Warszawska St. Campus, is situated in the city centre. Travel to and from home and work by the academic community generates a considerable amount of car traffic. Thus the University Authorities have for several years focused on activities aimed at decreasing car journeys and increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking. As a form of promoting cycling, the University has already organised two 'Bike Happenings' (in 2007 and 2008) within the framework of the integrated mobility plan implemented by the Institution within the CIVITAS CARAVEL project (2005-2009). 'The Happening', carried out under the TraCit project, continued this type of event which had been very popular among students and employees. Additionally, it had a greater importance than previously in that it focused not only on the promotion of cycling but also on the distribution of information about transport related CO2 emissions and the need to reduce them.



Description

Preparatory activities:

- Activities concerning the preparation of promotional items – public tender, choice of item supplier, item appearance details etc.
- Organisation of the location of the event – proceedings related to rental of the stage and sound system, etc.
- Contact with entities connected with the Bike Happening (Bike related organisations in Krakow, the city bike rental operator, University units), agreeing cooperation details.
- Contact with the press officer, editor of the University Newspaper and the University Photographer, to discuss the promotion of the Bike Happening.
- Preparation of the Bike Happening plan; preparation of competitions and related attractions.
- Printing up posters with information about the Bike Happening and sticking them up in locations in Krakow as well as at all University campuses.
- Printing leaflets and questionnaire forms for participants in the Happening, preparation of deposit box for questionnaires, etc.

Information channels:

- Posters in the area of the University.
- Local newspapers.
- Information on city bike related websites
- E-mail information and invitations sent to employees and students who have contact and/or classes with the event organisers.

Happening location:

The location was the main courtyard of the University – well known to all employees and students as the main place for meetings. The whole event was highly visible (the TraCit tent was placed in the courtyard) and because of energetic bike related music, everybody could hear what was going on. A special stage was erected for the master of ceremonies, for competition participants and others involved. The ceremonial opening of the Happening was performed by the University Rector. Participants in the Happening could make use of a free of charge maintenance point to repair their bikes and the police were marking bikes to protect them from theft.

Attractions:

- Promotion of city bike rental by BikeOne – the operator provided free one-week tickets for participants in the Happening,
- Short competitions: question & answer - in order to check basic knowledge about bike travel and infrastructure in the city. All prizes were related to bike travel, e.g.: bells, water

bottles,

- Competition: "Two wheels are better than four" - everybody who showed a meter or indicated their trip origin and transport mode gained information on how much CO2 they had saved (calculation of distance). The prize was a 3-week ticket for city bike rental in Krakow.
- Competition: "Pimp my bike" – the most original bike. Prize: a one-week ticket for city bike rental in Krakow,
- Competition: "The most elegant cyclist" (male and female) – original, unusual, interestingly dressed cyclists. Prize: photo session in the University newspaper.
- Debate: "Is Krakow a bike friendly city – how much CO2 can be saved by cycling?" During the discussion every participant could say something about cycling in the city and share their experience.

Participants received items such as stickers with the notice: "Cracow University of Technology – a University of cyclists", fluorescent visibility bands and balloons.

Questionnaire on change towards the bike:

The research questionnaire on readiness to change current transport modes to cycling was carried out among participants. The questionnaire also contained an evaluation of the event in itself. Everybody who filled in the questionnaire and put it in a special box got a T-shirt with the slogan: "Two wheels are better than four". At first, only 300 questionnaire forms were printed, but interest was so great that it was necessary to print more forms...In total 419 questionnaire forms were filled in by participants.

Willingness to change current transport modes to cycling and the factors influencing this change were very important issues for The Happening's organisers, and thus participants were asked how often they travelled by bike (almost every day, often or occasionally), what factors encouraged them to cycle every day or often, what were the reasons for occasional bike travel? They also provided information on which factors could encourage them to change their usual transport mode and travel by bike.

Support by University Authorities:

The University Authorities present a very friendly attitude towards the organisation of this kind of event for employees and students, and declare a readiness to promote pro-ecological transport modes. With regard to event implementation there is no need to comply with special legal regulations apart from those resulting from

public tender (in the case when a public entity is an event organiser).

Transfer and replicability:

The transfer of best practice, concerning the implementation of the Bike Happening concept, took place between Polish and Estonian partners. Information about the Polish Bike Happening, including advice about event organization as well as a description of results from Polish happenings

was prepared and given to Estonian partners – the Municipality of Viimsi. A questionnaire form for evaluation of the event and for obtaining data concerning people's readiness to change their current mode of transport to cycling was translated from Polish to English and Estonian partners used it in their bike event. The transfer of best practice was very successful – the Estonian bike event was organised on 4th of June 2011.



Indicators

- Number of participants.
- Number of people with increased awareness of transport CO2 emissions.
- Number of questionnaires completed.
- Number (percentage) of people who left the car at home and travelled by bike because of the Happening.
- Kg CO2 saved.



Results

Over 500 participants took part in The Bike Happening (unfortunately the day was not free of classes) and 419 questionnaires about people's readiness to change their transport habits were carried out. 24% of respondents admitted that they didn't use their car and travelled by bike that day because of the event. Happening cyclists (only respondents who completed the questionnaire forms) emitted 47kg of CO2 "yesterday" as a result of travelling by different transport modes, so it could be evaluated that, because of the Bike Happening, they saved approx. the same value of CO2 on the day of the event.

If all respondents who used bikes during the Happening changed their current mobility modes and cycled to the University in the future during the cycling season (April-June, October-November), the overall amount of CO2 saved per season by all these people could be as much as 5 tonnes.



Expense

The whole event including earlier informational activities and expenses related to:

- Stage rental.
- Sound system rental.
- Advertising e.g. in local newspapers, TV or radio
- Preparation and printing the posters, leaflets, questionnaire forms.
- Purchase of prizes for the winners of competitions.
- The cost of The Bike Happening at Cracow University of Technology was 5,500 €



Financing

All expenses were covered by the TraCit project.

Findings

- Information prior to the organisation of a bike happening is very important – use as many sources of information as possible to publicise the event among the target group.
- It is essential to invite people from cycling related organisations who have considerable knowledge about bike travel in the city. These people can give practical advice and moderate in discussions throughout the whole event.
- Giving practical information about the possible results of climate change (e.g.: glaciers melting, increasing downpours, floods and hurricanes as well as no snowfall, extremely high temperatures, bad conditions to go on holiday, no available skiing and bad living conditions in general, as a result of climate changes in the future) is very helpful because it shows effects which could influence the life of every citizen.
- Promotional items can attract many participants as well as increase the effectiveness of the survey (sometimes, if you want to obtain information from participants you have to offer something in return).
- The questionnaire form used for research carried out during such events has to be short, 2 pages at the most, because of the risk of unanswered questions or obtaining ill-considered answers made randomly by respondents.
- Organising a lot of activities such as competitions or debates where everybody can say something based on their experience can attract people to the event.
- Simple competitions with a few questions concerning basic knowledge about bikes in the city, (e.g. approx. number of km of bike paths) raise the knowledge of all participants. Prizes in competitions should be related to bikes and cycling, e.g. water bottles, bells etc.
- A very good idea is to organise a free bike maintenance point and protective anti-theft bike marking by the police – usually people have little opportunity or time to do this and during the event these attractions draw many people. For companies that make bike maintenance accessories it is also a promotion opportunity.
- Music makes the event more attractive, while the informational and promotional elements like posters, banners and tents make it more visible. Both elements attract people passing by, making the event noticed in the neighbourhood.
- Distribution of questionnaires during events provides essential data related to bike travel as well as a great opportunity to raise awareness of important questions.

Pictures



Fig.1. The winners of the one of happening competitions



Fig.2. Police anti-theft bike marking.

 Pictures



Fig.3. One of the cyclists telling a story about his bike.



Fig.4. Participants received bike related items.



Fig.5. Participants filling in questionnaire forms.

 Links

Not available.

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