

Road to Tomorrow and Innovations Challenge

Road to Tomorrow was MoDOT's branded effort to reach out to innovators -- inside and outside the transportation field -- to collect and explore new ideas in transportation and funding.

The Innovations Challenge is an annual statewide event where employees at any level and in any area can submit ideas and prototypes of innovations that enable us to do our work better, faster, cheaper, safer.

Communications Planning

R2T:

Outreach efforts largely focused on the Commission chairman and the Road to Tomorrow cross disciplinary team.

A communications person was on the R2T team who produced press releases and other collateral materials announcing the kickoff of the team and other events. He was also responsible for screening and categorizing the more than 300 ideas that were received and spearheaded grant-writing to enable the implementation of several pilot projects.

Innovations Challenge:

This is a highly engaged internal event and is discussed throughout the year through all internal channels.

Organization Integration

R2T:

A full time innovations director was hired in late 2016 to oversee the effort, although team members continue to participate.

Innovations Challenge:

This is an ingrained part of MoDOT, as significant as Work Zone Awareness Week. It is part of the MoDOT culture.

Communications Implementation

R2T:

A website was created to allow people to submit their innovative ideas and suggestions.

The website was frequently updated with categorized lists and descriptions of ideas being reviewed.

On the one-year anniversary of the effort, a commissioner and team members drove to the commission meeting in a Tesla electric car, garnering some media attention.

Innovations Challenge:

There is steady communications throughout the year, both formal and casual. Ideas for entries are communicated up and down the chain regularly.

Formal announcements and deadlines are communicated through newsletter, email, staff meetings, a SharePoint site and monitors in maintenance buildings.

As best-practices are implemented across the organization internal and external communication tells the story.

The event is held in conjunction with our annual statewide DOMInno meeting (Design, Operations, Maintenance, Innovation). Hundreds of employees in the program delivery and operations/maintenance units participate.

Cash prizes are awarded and equally shared among teams who win.