



Florida 511 Traveler Information System

Global-5 Communications, Inc. and Florida Department of Transportation, Jan 1, 2013

Summary: 2013 Silver Anvil Award Winner — Marketing Consumer Services —Other (Categories Not Elsewhere Defined)

The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) 511 Travel Information System is a free safety tool that provides real-time traffic updates on Florida's interstates and major roadways. FDOT studies in years past continually found 76 percent of drivers knew "nothing at all" about the free service. FDOT contracted Global-5 Communications to execute a grassroots awareness campaign based on strategic public relations and donated public service space in highly visible areas. By October 2012, the campaign had reached millions in targeted demographics and helped call volumes pass the eight million mark, while increasing awareness by 21 percent.

Marketing consumer services includes programs designed to introduce new services or promote existing services to a consumer audience.

Full Text: The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) 511 Travel Information System is a free safety tool that saves motorists money, time and fuel by providing real-time traffic updates on Florida's interstates and major roadways. Although Florida 511 launched in 2002, FDOT studies in 2006, 2008 and 2010 continually found 76 percent of drivers knew "nothing at all" about the free service. FDOT contracted Global-5 Communications to execute a grassroots awareness campaign based on strategic public relations and donated public service space in highly visible areas. By October 2012, the campaign had reached millions in targeted key demographics and helped push call volumes past the 8 million mark, while increasing awareness by 21 percent.

RESEARCH

The target market for 511 is Florida's nearly 14 million registered drivers and 90 million annual visitors. In October 2010, FDOT conducted a customer satisfaction tracking study of 2,800 drivers across Florida to explore 511 usage and perceptions. Statistically-proven results were used to establish Global-5's outreach plan. Key findings of the study included:

- 511 awareness is low; 76 percent of Floridians still know nothing about 511
- People who know about 511 trust the information; 77 percent of drivers would change their route due to information on the 511 service.
- There is a desire for the services provided by 511; there is a large potential market for 511
- 48 percent would use a free traffic service if they knew about it
- 49 percent of drivers would be interested in personalized traffic text or email messages

Additionally, FDOT tracked 511 system statistics since system launch to use as a baseline. Through 2011:

- Total calls to the 511 phone system – 6 million

- Total hits to FL511.com – 1.7 million
- Total iPhone app downloads – 30,000

PLANNING

To reach Florida's nearly 14 million registered drivers and 90 million annual visitors traveling throughout Florida, Global-5 designed an educational campaign with a media component to maximize FDOT's limited, non-profit budget.

Campaign Objectives:

- Generate impressions through broadcast and print media coverage.
- Secure high profile PSA placements to educate Florida's nearly 14 million licensed drivers and 90 million yearly visitors.
- Increase call volumes, website hits and mobile app downloads.
- Increase overall awareness of the 511 system.

Campaign Plan:

Take advantage of FDOT's non-profit status to reach millions of drivers through free public service advertising venues and proven relationship-based marketing.

Planning Tools Created:

Marketing Toolkit – Developed a suite of marketing communications materials with consistent branding and messaging for statewide distribution. Most items featured digital content to educate the public at no cost to the state.

Editorial Calendar – Created a comprehensive calendar identifying target dates for news release distribution before major events and holidays that impact travel. The calendar included publication deadlines for magazines.

EXECUTION

Global-5's creative department developed a consistent 511 brand to apply to marketing communications materials. The brand featured a professional, well-designed look in order to increase the likelihood of free placement in partner venues. Global-5 developed Educate.FL511.com to host all branded 511 materials offered in the marketing toolkit. Global-5 also maintained and regularly updated 511news.com to host all the news releases and supplemental media materials identified in the editorial calendar. Major campaign components included:

Media Outreach & 511News.com: News releases were distributed prior to every major travel holiday and community events attracting more than 200,000 attendees.

Media Events: Global-5 organized media events prior to Memorial Day and Thanksgiving holiday weekends at regional Traffic Management Centers. Florida Highway Patrol, AAA and FDOT representatives were invited to provide media interviews alongside 511 spokespeople. Major network affiliates from national top-20 media markets attended.

Partner Educational Outreach: Global-5 developed a strategic list of potential partners to distribute the marketing toolkit, such as major community events, city governments, large sporting events and colleges and universities.

Public Service Announcements: Florida 511 print PSAs were created and distributed to magazines that published them at no charge.

Billboards: Global-5 approached the Florida Outdoor Advertising Association to donate eight complimentary billboards and five bus shelter signs. Billboard locations include interstates and other major roadways.

Airport PSAs: Global-5 secured 47 backlit dioramas free of charge in Orlando International

Airport, Miami International Airport, Southwest International Airport, Jacksonville International Airport and Tampa International Airport.

Mall PSAs: Global-5 worked with indoor advertising agencies to have donated 26 lighted mall advertisements.

Bus Panels: Global-5 solicited transit authorities in the state to obtain free panel advertising on 10 commuter buses.

Partnership with the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV): Global-5 worked with DHSMV to have Florida 511 content included in the 2012 English and Spanish editions of the Driver, CVO and Motorcycle training handbooks.

Government & Community Outreach: Florida 511 information was shared with thousands of people through presentations and exhibit booths at civic clubs, community groups, public safety councils, training meetings and state and national conferences.

EVALUATION

Global-5 was able to reach millions of motorists and increase usage and awareness of the 511 system.

Campaign objectives included:

1. Generate impressions through broadcast and print coverage

- 7.4 million households reached through print and broadcast media in 2012.
- A Thanksgiving media event reached nearly one million television viewers, providing more than \$135,000 in publicity value in the central and southeast regions of Florida.
- ABC's World News with Diane Sawyer featured FL511.com during a Thanksgiving holiday travel segment.
- 340 total media and web placements in 2012.

2. Secure high profile PSA placements to educate Florida's nearly 14 million licensed drivers and 90 million yearly visitors

- Airport PSAs – Generated 112,550,692 impressions; \$4,560,360 worth of donated space.
- Mall PSAs – Generated 216,000,000 impressions; \$296,400 worth of donated advertising space.
- Bus Panels – Generated 4,625,000 impressions.
- *AARP Magazine & Enjoy Florida Magazine* Print PSAs – 3.5 million impressions.
- Florida Official Driver Handbooks – 1.4 million books printed.

3. Increase call volumes and web visits

- Total calls – 8 million; 33 percent increase from 2011.
- Total web hits – 2.5 million visitors; 48 percent increase from 2011.
- Total app downloads – 48,000; 62 percent increase from 2011.

4. Increase overall awareness of the 511 system

- 21 percent increase in overall awareness from October 2010 to October 2012 based on a customer satisfaction tracking study.