



MEDIA RELEASE

USING FEEDBACK SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Winnipeg, Nov. 19, 2008 – The Centre for Sustainable Transportation (CST) at The University of Winnipeg is researching a local device that could lead to decreases in vehicle emissions and fuel consumption and increases in driver safety.

The Centre is entering Phase II of the “ecoEnergy for Personal Vehicles Program,” which studies the effect driver feedback system have on driver behaviour.

“We want to know if the information provided by driver feedback systems helps people become better drivers,” said Terry Zhan, Research director for the CST. “Do they have an influence on road safety, fuel consumption, and vehicle emissions?”

The CST has equipt 11 volunteers with in-vehicle OttoView[®] and OttoLink[®] devices, the newest addition to the Otto family of driver feedback systems developed by Winnipeg company Persen Technologies Inc. These systems will provide drivers with “real-time” information including trip time, idle time, cost of fuel, CO₂ emissions and trip summaries with total trip costs including insurance and maintenance costs.

Using GPS technology, the Otto devices can track the location of a vehicle within a given area, alerting drivers to slow down for reduced speedlimits, school zones, dangerous intersections or red light cameras.

“These devices have the potential to change urban traffic conditions,” said Arne Elias, Executive Director for the CST. “Drivers can adjust their travels to road and traffic conditions to reduce idling time, plan their routes to increase efficiency, or find the safest routes.”

“The data we collect will be recorded to assess any behavioral changes when drivers make when provided with detailed visual feedback.” said Arne Elias, Executive Director of CST. “With this research, participants and the general public can become more aware of the actual costs of driving, on a trip and overall basis.”

The previous phase of the project utilized the Otto-Driving Companion, which has been available for consumer purchase since 2005, to track driver behaviour. The program is funded by a Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) project called, “Using Otto to reduce transportation emissions by driver behaviour.” NRCAN will use the results of this study as a basis for further policy development on driver feedback systems.

-30-

The CST at The University of Winnipeg is a membership based, non-profit organization that facilitates best practices for the movement of people and goods over the long-term. CST bridges academic, business, and



The Centre for Sustainable Transportation
Le Centre pour un transport durable

at  THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

public interests to identify and help craft winning transportation solutions that benefit society and environment and enhance mobility. For more information, visit <http://cst.uwinnipeg.ca>.

For more information, please contact:

Jolene Bergen, Communications and Membership Co-ordinator
(204) 988-7180
j.bergen@uwinnipeg.ca