

Partner Case Study: Charlotte Chamber



FACTFILE:

Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

Industry:

Business association

Location:

Charlotte, NC
Mecklenburg County

Statistics:

- 50 employees
- 64 percent response rate to baseline survey

Reasons for joining *Clean Air Works!*

- To raise air quality awareness

Challenges Overcome:

- Raising awareness of transportation alternatives. Many employees were unaware of the convenience of CATS.

Business Benefits:

- Improved morale with summer flextime policy
- Increased productivity

Results:

- Employees reported over 180 new alternative commute trips
- Through clean commuting, participants eliminated 6,185 vehicle miles from area roads
- Benefited from being seen as a concerned corporate citizen

Program Summary: 2006

The Charlotte Chamber's interest in raising air quality awareness was evidenced by its partnership with *Clean Air Works!* in July of 2006. The Charlotte Chamber's announcement to rollout its *Clean Air Works!* program sparked participation among employees. The announcement, which was sent to all Chamber employees, included two external links that employees were encouraged to visit: an online travel survey, and a Web site in which employees could "log" their daily commutes to work for chances to win \$25 gift cards.

To introduce the new program to employees, the Chamber held a kickoff event in early August. The event took place during its normal staff meeting, with most employees present. CATS, NC Air Awareness and *Clean Air Works!* each gave a brief presentation and encouraged employees to participate in selected trip-reduction programs. Breakfast and coffee were provided to employees as an incentive for participation.

The Charlotte Chamber completed its baseline survey and had a response rate over 64 percent. Based on survey results and to encourage its employees to use an alternative to commuting, the Chamber offered its employees a \$30 reward for using an alternate commute to get to work consistently during the month of September; this reward was in addition to the Chamber's maintaining its flextime program. Trips by participating employees were monitored through the CommuteTrak online tracking system and/or through paper tracking logs. Employees who used an alternative at least twice a week over the month (or eight times total) were eligible.

The Chamber had approximately 57 percent of its workforce tracking in July. In that month, employees captured 19 carpool trips, 95 transit trips, 21 walk trips and nine trips reduced due to teleworking. In addition, two employees began taking transit and carpooling with the inception of the program, representing 14 carpool trips, 22 transit trips and two trips avoided by telecommuting. In August, there were 22 Charlotte Chamber employees who tracked 163 transit trips, 85 carpool trips, 46 vanpool trips, and 32 walk trips; 12 trips were avoided by telecommuting. The number of employees who began using an alternative with the Pilot program doubled during August. These commuters represented 37 carpool trips, 48 transit trips and four trips reduced by telecommuting. The number of alternate commute trips recorded by employees increased from 144 in July to 338 in August.



"We are pleased that businesses are being encouraged to voluntarily develop programs to address our air quality issues."

Bob Morgan
President, Charlotte Chamber

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