

Transportation Library Connectivity Pooled Fund Study
TPF-5(105)

G3 Expansion Pilot Final Report

Prepared by

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Background

The Institute of Transportation Studies Library (ITSL) at the University of California, Berkeley, provides a number of services to public employees in the state of California through its partnership with the California Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). CA LTAP is administered by the institute.

One of the services, *Going, Going, Gone...*, distributes surplus copies of printed publications to public employees on request. Employees register with the program and then can browse or search the G3 database for items of interest. They send the request to ITSL and items are shipped at no charge to the person requesting material.

Publications include technical reports from state DOTs, UTCs, and federal agencies; manuals and handbooks; and checklists. Publications are grouped by topic for browsing:

Administration, Management, and Finance	Non-Auto Modes
Bicycles and Pedestrians	Pavement and Highways
Bridges	Safety and Security
Environment	Traffic Engineering and Operations
Intelligent Transportation Systems	Transit
Miscellaneous	Work Zone Safety
Multimodal Planning and Policy	

ITSL was interested in offering the service to public employees outside of California. In 2009, I contacted the TPF-5(105) and the National Transportation Library to request funding for a pilot program to gauge the level of interest. Funds from the National TKN Resource Sharing Network Project were allocated to pay for shipping material outside of California, and ITSL agreed to cover labor and all other administrative costs. Please see the original proposal in Appendix I.

Pilot Program

The pilot ran from October 1 to December 15, 2009. The program was publicized through the regional Transportation Knowledge Networks (Eastern Transportation Knowledge Network, Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network, and Western Transportation Knowledge Network) and TranLib, the discussion list of the Transportation Division of the Special Libraries Association. The website for G3 was updated to reflect the pilot and acknowledge support from TPF-5(105).

During the 10-week pilot, 480 items were sent in fulfillment of requests from 15 states outside of California. A complete list by state of all titles requested by state is in Appendix II.

Costs

The total expenditures from the TKN Resource Sharing Pilot FedEx shipping account was \$966.22. This account is funded by TPF-5(105).

Other costs included packaging orders and averaged 30 minutes. Nearly 160 separate orders were processed. Student employees, who handled most of the processing, are paid \$12/hour for a labor cost of about \$1000 for the pilot at the expense of UC Berkeley.

Data Analysis

The Problem Statement for this project estimated a demand of 80-200 items per month. Actual demand was just under 200 items per month.

The volume of requests varied widely by state. Requests were received from 15 states outside of California, leaving 34 states with no requests.

Seven of the states accounted for more than 90% of the 480 requested items. Washington alone accounted for 30%. Of the remaining eight states from which orders were received, none requested more than a dozen items.

The total number of items requested by state varied from 144 from Washington to one from Pennsylvania.

Comments and Lessons Learned

Although the trend to electronic publishing is accelerating, and many reports, manuals and other material are available in a digital format, a strong demand continues to exist for printed publications. Public employees in California have found G3 to be a useful service, and the pilot appears to validate that demand in the wider transportation community.

There does not appear to be any correlation between the number of requests and whether a state is part of a regional TKN. There are no TKN members in Nebraska, Nevada and Hawaii, and about one-third of the total requests came from those three states.

The distribution of the source of requests may reflect how the pilot was promoted. Announcements were made via TranLib, which reaches about 250 subscribers. Information was sent to the chairs of the regional TKNs for distribution to their members; about 50 agencies and organizations, including 28 state DOTs, are TKN members. More comprehensive or consistent marketing of the program could have generated a greater volume of requests from a larger number of states.

During the pilot, several libraries asked if the program could be expanded to allow ITSL to serve as a true clearinghouse for printed material for transportation researchers and practitioners. At present, organizations with duplicate material may post lists of available items to TranLib, but there is no national or international program to facilitate getting this material into the hands of people who can use it. Under a new scenario, organizations would ship their material to ITSL, where it would be entered into the G3 database, made available to public employees, and distributed free of charge upon request. Proposals for such a clearinghouse have been made for at least 40 years. It is indicative of the challenges involved, including funding, that the G3 pilot serves as the closest thing to a true clearinghouse that the community has seen.

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FFY 2009 Special Project Proposal
Transportation Library Connectivity Pooled Fund Study, TPF-5(105)

- I. **PROBLEM TITLE: Expansion of California LTAP Duplicate Publication Distribution Program to all states as part of the National TKN Resource Sharing Pilot Project.**
- II. **BACKGROUND:** Getting transportation information in the hands of the people who need it requires many different approaches. For several years, California LTAP has provided a service to public employees in the state of California called Going, Going, Gone (G3). G3 distributes duplicate copies of research reports, technical reports, manuals and other publications received by the Institute of Transportation Studies Library (ITSL) at UC Berkeley. Transportation employees access a website to browse current publication titles by topic. They can then order items of interest at no charge.

The current program is funded by CA LTAP and is administered by ITSL. It uses e-commerce software (Xcart) that provides an easy-to-use interface with common features. While many of the publications are available electronically, engineers, researchers and practitioners value access to printed copies for their portability and as desk references. Print and electronic versions of many publications exist side-by-side and access and ease of use depend on format. Many digital resources have restricted user licenses and do not provide mobile applications.

- III. **OBJECTIVES:** In the interest of promoting greater access to transportation information, ITSL would like to expand the program and make G3 available to public employees of any: state DOT; city or county DOT or DPW; transit agency, authority or district; MPO; or any federal agency involved in transportation that is participating in the National TKN Resource Sharing Pilot Project for a six month pilot project from October 1, 2009 -December 15, 2009. The objectives are:
1. Aid collection development in transportation libraries by facilitating the acquisition of valuable and expensive resources that could not otherwise be purchased.
 2. Create an efficient method of eliminating duplicate materials to create much needed physical space in libraries.
 3. Enable other stakeholders with a strong presence in the transportation industry to acquire much needed relevant transportation information.

No additional funds are needed. The publications themselves are provided free of charge to ITSL. California LTAP will continue to cover administrative costs, including all personnel. TPF-5(105) is being asked to cover postage costs to out-of-state customers as part of the National TKN Resource Sharing Pilot Project. The proposed cost for the 2.5 month pilot is \$3,000.00 from the TKN Resource Sharing FedEx account.

- IV. **SPECIFIC RESULTS, FINDINGS, TOOLS ETC. (DELIVERABLES)**

1. Increase the number of duplicates requested and added to other collections. During the past two years, an average of 55 items per month have been distributed to public employees. While it is difficult to project the demand if the program is expanded beyond California, an increase to 80-200 items per month is a reasonable estimate.
2. Discover the topical categories most often being requested, and by what type of agency.
3. Establish a qualitative measure (via embedded 4-5 question survey) to acquire a profile of requestors, whether they are a manager, engineer, IT, etc. and gauge what is most important to practitioners.
4. Determine the cost savings to users by reporting the total funds used from the TKN Resource Sharing FedEx account.
5. Quarterly reports including the number of items and agencies, and topic areas.

V. HOW WILL THE RESULTS BE USED? The results will be disseminated to the NTL, regional TKNs, the AASHTO RAC TKN Task Force and the SLA Transportation Division in a report that they may take to upper transportation management as part of internal outreach and advocacy efforts at the national level.

VI. SUBMITTED BY:

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Requesting State	TKN	Items Shipped	Type of Document*
Alabama	N/A	3	
California	WTKN	168	
Hawaii	N/A	44	
Illinois	MTKN	71	
Kansas	MTKN	11	
Maryland	N/A	6	
Montana	WTKN	39	
Nebraska	N/A	62	
New Hampshire	N/A	4	
Nevada	N/A	59	
Ohio	MTKN	17	
Oklahoma	N/A	5	
Oregon	WTKN	3	
Pennsylvania	ETKN	1	
Texas	WTKN	11	
Washington	WTKN	144	
Total		648	

*Information requested from ITS 1/29/10