

# Technology in Rural Transportation



A recent study documented more than eighty proven, cost-effective, “low-tech” solutions to rural transportation needs, most developed or implemented by local transportation professionals. One of these solutions is outlined below:

Learn all about the simple solutions on the Internet at <http://inform.enterprise.prog.org>

The simple solutions report is available from Hau To at (503) 892-2533, or email: [to@crc-corp.com](mailto:to@crc-corp.com)

## Traveler Information Network

**Overall goal:** Provide emergency alerts and traveler information to Florida travelers through a cost effective public/private partnership.

**Technical approach:** TIRN Broadcasting has contracted with Florida DOT to provide traveler information to Florida travelers in exchange for right-of-way access to erect large signs that say “Traveler Information Radio” and the particular radio frequency of the affiliate in the area. Under the partnership, Florida DOT gets one minute for every ten-minute segment to report traffic incidents, lane closures, work-zones, etc. During natural disasters and emergencies, Florida DOT has the authority to take over TIRN Broadcasting to disseminate emergency traveler information. TIRN Broadcasting is allowed to erect a total of 4,600 signs along Florida highways and sell four minutes of each ten-minute segment as commercials. The broadcasting will be similar to CNN Headline News where information is given at pre-determined times - traffic information at quarter-past, tourist information at half-past. Also, of the ten-minute block, four minutes will be local information and six minutes will be statewide information. TIRN Broadcasting will recoup their costs through selling the advertising space. TIRN is upgrading its website, [www.tirn.com](http://www.tirn.com), to provide out of state travelers with the audio broadcast and incident information. Currently Florida has no centralized system to gather or disseminate incident information. TIRN will implement free \* cell numbers for the public to call and report traffic situations. This information will be made available on both the audio broadcast and the website.

**Current** TIRN is upgrading its website, [www.tirn.com](http://www.tirn.com), to provide out of state



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<b>status:</b>	travelers with the audio broadcast and incident information. Currently Florida has no centralized system to gather or disseminate incident information. TIRN will implement free * cell numbers for the public to call and report traffic situations. This information will be made available on both the audio broadcast and the website.
<b>Location / geographic scope:</b>	All limited access highways in the State of Florida.
<b>Agencies involved:</b>	Florida DOT, TIRN Broadcasting
<b>Cost information:</b>	The Florida TIRN will be paid for entirely through private-sector funds. Commercial spots will cost \$25 for 30 seconds and \$45 for 60 seconds. Florida DOT does not control the cost of commercial spots. The program is currently breaking even. With statewide coverage, income from commercials is expected to increase, as larger chains and franchises are approached.
<b>Key contacts:</b>	Dick Kane, Florida DOT (850) 414-4590; Joe Gettys, TIRN Broadcasting (407) 481-0551
<b>Have goals been achieved?</b>	Feedback from phone calls has been positive; they have also provided helpful suggestions. Official surveys of public opinion will be done later in the project, as more stations come online.
<b>Solution timeline:</b>	A total of 18 commercial radio stations will blanket the State of Florida. As of January 2001, one station is operational in the Orlando and Brevard Counties. Currently, 161 of the 2,200 signs have been installed. Five more stations are scheduled to begin broadcasting in the next six months. The remaining 12 will be operational by January 2002.

