

Open Government Case Study: CamperMate

Intended to reduce negative impact that freedom camping has on the environment and create a better experience for campers

Leveraged data from various external sources including central and local government and private sector

Application would have been developed more quickly if source data was readily available and open

CamperMate

CamperMate is a smart phone application created by a company called Mogeo, and is available at www.campermate.co.nz providing information about local facilities to campers/travellers throughout New Zealand.

Media coverage about the mess left behind by freedom campers before the rugby world cup (2011) sparked the idea for this application. The creators of CamperMate interviewed campers and asked them why they thought the problem became so bad. The main response was that there was little to no information about where commonly required facilities are.

Features of CamperMate

The application uses the phone's GPS to locate the user on a map, otherwise the website allows you to enter a location. The user can select the following categories which the application looks up and then displays the locations sites or services near the user:

- rubbish bins
- public toilets
- dump stations
- campsites
- petrol stations
- supermarkets
- free wifi zones
- police stations
- hospitals
- hostels.

Sources of data

As well as gathering some of their own data, the creators re-used data from various external sources, including central government, local government, not for profits and the private sector.

None of the data was readily available as open data, and it took time to get in contact with the right people within organisations and additional time to source and convert the data. Most requests for data were met with enthusiastic support.

If the original source data had been readily available as open data, the application would have been developed more quickly and maintaining its accuracy would be an easier task.

Some data sources were more accurate than others, however there is a feedback mechanism built into the application that enables users to point out errors or add information that is missing. This is a good example of an effective use of crowd-sourcing to improve the accuracy of the data over time.

Outcomes

This application brings together information required by travellers and makes it easily accessible through one source.

A private company has re-used the data to provide a value added service that enhances the experience of travellers, both domestic and international.

Citizens and visitors can make better decisions that both improve their experience while travelling in New Zealand and contribute to a sustainable environment.

