

Open Government Case Study: InfoConnect

New Zealand Transport Agency

The NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) creates transport solutions for a thriving New Zealand through four core business functions:

- planning the land transport networks;
- investing in land transport;
- managing the state highway network, and
- providing access to and use of the land transport system.

InfoConnect

InfoConnect is an NZTA initiative to help ensure road users have access to timely and accurate road condition information.

The ultimate aim of InfoConnect is to help empower road users to make their own travel choices and decisions by having access to useful information.

It includes state highway road and traffic information, webcam coverage in Auckland, Waiouru, Otaki, Paremata, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, planned road works, unplanned road closures and delays, maps, and holiday traffic information.

Features of InfoConnect

InfoConnect allows developers and third parties to access real time travel information from the NZTA for free. In return, the NZTA asks that those developers and third parties 'add value' by re-packing and re-publishing road-related information in a timely and accurate manner.

Risk mitigation

NZTA had been approached by a number of third parties requesting access to highway-related information that NZTA collected, which placed NZTA at risk of forming 'ad hoc' commercial arrangements with various third parties.

NZTA recognised that only a small component of services within the information technology arena could be delivered by them and that, to meet road user demands for information, they needed to partner with proven third parties who specialised in providing technical solutions to deliver NZTA information.

The decision was made to provide free information to 'registered' developers under 'Terms of Use'. NZTA could then monitor uptake and have a view of who is delivering the best products in a proven manner.

Cost and timeframe

InfoConnect was developed for \$380,000 and has been estimated to have a potential net benefit of between \$6 to \$60 million per annum.

Users can access timely and accurate road condition information

InfoConnect began as a pilot and has now been developed into several websites and apps

Developers have access to real-time travel information for free

NZTA recognised the need to involve third parties in solution delivery

Economic and social impacts

Several applications and websites that demonstrate usage of InfoConnect data are available, including the following:

- AATrafficWebCams
- Virtual Highway
- NZTraffic
- AA Roadwatch
- HowsTheTraffic
- AA Maps
- AA Roadwatch
- MultiCam Wellington
- MultiCam Auckland
- Auckland Traffic Cameras
- Yahoo! Traffic
- Auckland TC.

Potential for InfoConnect to provide significant economic benefit to New Zealand

InfoConnect has the potential to provide significant economic benefit to New Zealand. For example, a developer using a combination of Auckland traffic data feeds from InfoConnect has over 1200 users, growing at more than 70 new users per week. It is ranked number one in Navigation, number 68 in New Zealand.

See further examples at <https://infoconnect.highwayinfo.govt.nz/opencms/opencms/infoconnect>.

NZTA can focus on its core business of collection of data

Efficiency impacts

By providing information for free, the NZTA is able to focus on its core business of collecting road condition data and managing the State Highway network while third parties with technology expertise can work on innovative ways to distribute the information to road users.

InfoConnect enables road users to contribute to the webportal, whereby APIs are served up and monitored within an operational data store and enterprise service bus (ESB) framework architecture. Users can also be split into normal and high priority.

Third parties work on innovative ways to distribute NZTA information to road users

Transparency and democratic impacts

The following factors were identified as critical to the success to InfoConnect:

- number of project applications launched: 5 per year
- increase from 6,000 to 30,000 unique visitors per year
- developer satisfaction survey over 75% (surveyed annually)
- 75% of road users report an improved ability to make informed road user and travel decisions
- the InfoConnect website is available for use by developers and third parties 98% of the time.

Currently InfoConnect has approximately 150 registered users.

