



Information Technology

Press release

City Employees commuted a distance corresponding to 235 marathons without carbon emissions

In only 10 weeks, employees of the City of Gothenburg have succeeded in reducing their carbon emissions through changes in their commuting habits using Commute Greener, a new mobile phone and web application from Volvo IT. One of the groups actually succeeded in reducing its carbon emissions by as much as two thirds. To date, 9,900 zero-emission kilometers have been registered – a distance corresponding to 235 marathons.

The balance between the growing need for transport, on the one hand, and the environment and health, on the other, poses a constant challenge for municipal planners, logistics specialists, companies and the producers of transport solutions. Commute Greener has proven to influence people's awareness and to generate measurable results by making individuals aware of their own carbon emissions.

The technology is being used by the City of Gothenburg in Sweden, which is offering Commute Greener to employees in a suburb as well as at a public office. The participants were put into some 50 different groups, each containing between five and 50 people. They all began by entering their normal travel patterns into the web/mobile-phone software and thereby received an individual carbon footprint. At the same time, they set a target for reducing their carbon emissions; each individual kilogram of carbon dioxide was calculated. The average target was a reduction of around 10%, which corresponded, for example, to leaving the car at home for one day every second week. Most of the groups have surpassed their targets. Within the space of ten weeks, one group had managed to smash its reduction target; the group members reduced their carbon emissions by 67%.

“Great fun!” says Marja Högberg, environmental co-ordinator at Biskopsgården. “Every kilogram of carbon dioxide was counted and I think it gave many people a new understanding and insight. The opportunity to set your own targets and then follow the difference every single one of us makes, is really stimulating. We would like to continue using Commute Greener.”

To date, around 9,900 “zero-emission kilometers” (more than 6150 Zero emission miles) have been registered by the employees of the City of Gothenburg. Increasing the number of pedestrians and cyclists is not only good for the environment, it also has a positive impact on health and saving fuel money.

“People are motivated by different things. The environment is important to everyone, but, on a personal level, it may well be a person’s own health or economic situation that finally encourages them to change their behaviour,” says Magnus Kuschel, Managing Director for Commute Greener at Volvo IT. “For an urban planner, the important thing may be to reduce emissions or congestion in transport systems and avoid large-scale investments in the road network. For companies it is a way to reduce their carbon footprint at the same time as building team spirit. It involves more than simply improving the environment. It’s also a question of creating a better society and enhancing quality of life.”

To make the daily commute more enjoyable, Commute Greener offers functions in social networks like Facebook, to share experiences and motivate people to improve their commuting habits.

“We have been working on campaigns of different types for several years with the aim of reaching the general public,” says Petter Kjellgren at the Traffic and Public Transport Authority in the City of Gothenburg. “Commute Greener gives us a new opportunity to involve, quantify, measure and follow up results. As there has never previously been a service like Commute Greener, we have also been involved in the development work.”

Local authorities, government agencies, companies and individuals all over the world share the same concern when it comes to transport and climate challenges. Commute Greener has shown that it is able to bring about changes in behaviour that result in better transportation solutions and help to produce sustainable development. At the present time, there are users in some 20 countries and Volvo IT has signed agreements with a number of cities and companies in different countries relating to the use of Commute Greener.

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For pictures, go to the AB Volvo [image gallery](#)

You can find more information about Commute Greener using this link:

<http://www.commutegreener.com/>

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