



Wyoming DOT efficiently reaches drivers with 511 Notify travel alerts



Client Situation

From engineers who design and supervise road construction, to snowplow drivers who keep those roads safe, to troopers who serve and protect highway users, the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) is committed to building a better transportation system for the traveling public.

WYDOT provides numerous services and a wide range of transportation-related functions that impact everyone driving along Wyoming roadways. WYDOT is responsible for maintaining highways, providing law enforcement on the roadways, and providing motor vehicle and driver licensing services. Residents of the State of Wyoming rely on the department's effective use of its resources to keep them informed on roadway conditions and all other details that could impact their travel.

Near the end of 2008, WYDOT began to consider digital communications solutions that would provide the agency with a mechanism for delivering important, time-sensitive roadway information directly to citizens. The agency needed a method of digital communication that was simple to use (both for the agency and citizens), could handle the agency's myriad of information, and would only provide subscribers with road updates relevant to them.

Solution

WYDOT launched its 511 Notify service in April 2009 to better communicate with citizens. This service relies on GovDelivery to deliver critical travel alerts to those who are directly impacted. Travel alerts include temporary or seasonal road closures and openings, difficult travel conditions (i.e. reduced visibility, high winds) and road-specific updates.

Wyoming DOT planned strategically to take full advantage of GovDelivery's capabilities in offering subscription options via an interactive map. Citizens can find the routes they travel most often on the map and can opt-in to receive daytime or nighttime alerts, or only road closure notices for those routes. In addition to route-related updates, citizens can subscribe to receive information on construction projects and local events

The department makes sure to promote its 511 Notify system as a PRE-TRIP information system, as Wyoming state law prohibits texting while driving.

Results

WYDOT's 511 Notify system directly communicates with more than 5,700 subscribers on more than 1,800 detailed subscription topics. The most popular subscription topics offered are that of daytime alerts for I-25, followed by the nighttime alerts for this same route – more than 1,600 and 1,400 citizens are subscribed to receive these notifications, respectively.

Weather and road conditions can change rapidly, and with alerts being sent to subscribers with each relevant change, the scope of total messages delivered is substantial. Since Jan. 1, 2010, WYDOT has sent more than 11.5 million messages to subscribers.

In August 2010, WYDOT was recognized as an *Excellence in Communications Award* recipient for the innovative use of '511 Notify', email and text messaging to deliver accurate and timely alerts on more than 220 distinct roadways, making travelers more informed and safer.

