Traffic Engineers Do More Than Count Cars

OTISS
ONLINE TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY SOFTWARE

Traffic engineers don't get a lot of recognition for the work they do. A general perception is that traffic engineering is a field of study that involves only counting cars. However, road safety and design is improving dramatically because of the studies conducted by traffic engineers. In the past, traffic engineers rarely benefitted from the latest web technologies and had to rely on time consuming, costly desktop solutions. With the introduction of OTISS from Transoft Solutions, traffic engineers now have an accepted online tool that not only makes their jobs easier but also enables them to take their business beyond their region of service.

OTISS is a cloud-based application for traffic and transportation engineers who need to perform traffic impact assessments. Featuring data from over 5,500 studies included in the 9th Edition Institute of Transportation Engineering (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, OTISS is the most complete trip generation and analysis tool available today with 24 hour availability across PC's, Macs, and mobile devices.

Chet Skwarcan, President of Traffic Engineering Inc has worked on traffic impact and trip generation studies for clients across the Midwest since the late 1990s. When OTISS was developed in 2012, Skwarcan knew it could help him.

"For whatever reason, it seemed civil engineers were always the last to benefit from new technology," said Skwarcan. "As a co-founder of one of the early internet companies, this was a frustration to say the least. So, when I heard about OTISS, my ears perked up. Finally, someone had developed software that combined traffic engineering methodology with cutting edge technology."

OTISS puts a vast array of traffic impact studies at an engineer's fingertips. Trip generation analysis, trip internalization and pass-by trips can be completed online without the need for manual calculations or spreadsheets.

"We've been using OTISS since its debut and quite frankly, I can't imagine performing a traffic study without it," said Skwarcan. "For many years it seemed that if we wanted to be on the cutting edge, we would have to write the software in-house. I just completed another traffic impact study today involving eight land uses along a state route resulting in two new traffic signals and significant off-site improvements. Using OTISS allowed me to quickly project hourly and weekday traffic volumes both entering and exiting the site. Additionally, the built-in links to details such as hourly traffic variations and statistical coefficients were invaluable when making solid recommendations based on relevant historical data."

Skwarcan's company does the majority of their work in Indiana, with projects along several state routes and the Indiana Department of Transportation reviews and approves all the completed work. Because OTISS is based on ITE data, INDOT is confident in the results of Skwarcan's calculations.

"More than anything, OTISS provides peace of mind," said Skwarcan. "I no longer worry about accuracy of calculations, formulas and reference materials. And, being cloud-based, back-ups are a thing of the past; plus I can pick up where I left off no matter which office I am in (at home, or at the beach)."

OTISS was developed in collaboration with ITE and builds on a 20-year history of software development. One of Transoft's design mantras is "by engineers, for engineers" and OTISS bridges a technological gap for a previously underserved segment of the engineering profession. Skwarcan appreciates the research and development that went into OTISS.

"I have personally met the folks at OTISS and believe me, they 'get it'", said Skwarcan. "Their history with our profession and sincere desire to create software that works the way we do is apparent." ■