

SuperGold AT Hop Card

Ministry of Transport



The brief

The challenge Following a Ministry of Transport Review of the SuperGold (SG) Card public transport scheme, AT was required to ensure all senior citizen public transport users purchased and started using an AT Hop card. While there was a list of benefits associated with the switch, the 90,000 Auckland SG card holders (who were estimated to be using public transport), had to go through the process of making the switch and paying \$15 for the privilege – all to retain an existing entitlement. AT developed an information pack; however lacked a stakeholder and media communications strategy. Wright Communications was engaged in April 2016 to develop the strategy and work with AT to implement it ahead of the 1 July deadline.

The Wright approach

Wright Communications reviewed AT's project risk register and added to the potential risks and issues. This comprehensive document became the basis for the Communications Strategy.

The strategy, also based on focus group research, was designed to ensure all audiences had a clear understanding of the change and its benefits. We stipulated that: SG card holders needed access to easy and clear information to help them make the switch; AT should be recognised as taking a responsible, caring approach to the change; and negative public comment or media coverage of the project should be minimised.

Along with internal and political audiences as well as the media, the plan featured a range of other audiences designed to reach Auckland's senior citizens. Seniors groups (Age Concern, Grey Power, Probus, U3A, RSAs etc.) were included, along with major retirement villages, volunteer networks, and church groups.

Strategies and tactics for each audience were developed and Wright Communications produced all material needed (media releases, presentations to stakeholder groups, Q & As etc.) to complement the marketing collateral developed by AT.

Working alongside the AT project team we provided additional and updated material, responses for media and politicians as well as ongoing, highly-valued strategic advice to the AT team.

Outcome

All aspects of this project had to contribute to a single operational success measure - 90,000 SG concessions on AT Hop cards by 1 July 2016.

As of 30 June 2016, the numbers were sitting at 85.7% of the target (77,158) however, an additional 17,256 SG card holders had begun the process, taking the total beyond the 90,000 target.

The vast majority of SuperGold card holders received the information they needed to successfully make the switch well within the tight timeline.

Client satisfaction

"We really appreciate your expertise in developing a thorough stakeholder and media campaign strategy; the media FAQs were extremely helpful in addition to the stakeholder presentations. Furthermore, your attention to detail, flexible approach to the communication strategy, commitment to meeting key deliverable dates (some of which with tight turnaround times) and advice to proactively address communication concerns was a huge benefit and had a positive impact on the overall success of this initiative."

Kate Nolan - Commercial Advisor, Policy & Projects, Commercial, Auckland Transport Metro