

# International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association Strategic Business Plan 2008 – 2010

**IBTTA Vision:** To improve the quality of life around the world by providing, where feasible, user-financed transportation focused on mobility, value, and environmental responsibility.

**IBTTA Mission:** We are the worldwide alliance of toll operators and associated industries that provides a forum for sharing knowledge and ideas to promote and enhance toll financed transportation services.

## Strategic Business Plan Major Objectives

1. Position IBTTA as the thought leader on user financed transportation
2. Strengthen our meetings and educational offerings
3. Enhance our data warehouse and related information products
4. Invest in the staff and technology needed to better serve the members
5. Reinforce IBTTA's identity as an international organization
6. Move towards a strategic governance model

## Background and Introduction

In September 2004, the IBTTA Board of Directors adopted a business plan to guide IBTTA for the years 2005-2007. We said at the time that we wanted to position IBTTA and its members to exploit trends that will see tolling emerge as one of the most important forces in highway finance and operations around the world.

The business plan noted two key forces at work in the environment: (1) the increasing demand for new sources of highway funding to promote mobility and reduce congestion; and (2) profound advances in technology that make tolling more appealing to politicians and the general public. We also noted that the convergence of these two phenomena had resulted in a noticeably more positive public attitude toward tolling than ever before.

Given the convergence of these forces, the plan said, IBTTA must seize the opportunity to assert its role as the preeminent authority on tolling and a leader in promoting long-term solutions to major challenges like the transportation finance crisis in America and the world.

The business plan adopted in 2004 was prophetic. Together we have achieved significant gains for the members of IBTTA and the toll industry. Under the guidance of the business plan over the last three years, we have:

- Positioned IBTTA as a thought leader on transportation and as a serious player in the debate over transportation policy in the U.S.;
- Created the most comprehensive database on toll facilities in the world and positioned IBTTA as the authoritative source on tolling; and
- Strengthened IBTTA's ability to create meetings and develop profound educational experiences for professionals in the toll industry.

Now we propose a new business plan for 2008-2010 that builds on the current plan. While this new plan is not a significant departure from the last one, neither is it about resting on past success. Through this new strategic business plan, we intend to:

- Consolidate the gains we've made over the last three years;
- Build up IBTTA's capability to develop vital information assets and perform robust analysis of the role of user financed transportation in the public policy process; and
- Serve the current and future membership of IBTTA through the highest quality educational experiences and other opportunities for information exchange.

In advancing this plan, we acknowledge an important paradox: change is certain and "certainty" is changing. We further acknowledge that:

- The forces driving change in the toll industry are growing and the rate of change is increasing;
- Financing and transportation services are inseparable partners;
- Road user charging could be reinvented in the next 5 to 10 years;
- Tomorrow will be different and our challenge is to stay relevant; and
- IBTTA needs to be at the forefront of the transportation (financing) debate – a leader supporting member needs.

## **2008 – 2010 Business Plan**

Building on the last business plan, IBTTA will continue striving to be:

- THE advocate for tolling
- THE central clearinghouse on toll industry information
- THE leader in producing the highest quality meetings and educational experiences for the toll industry in every region of the world that utilizes user financed transportation
- THE leader in user financed transportation technology-related systems for pricing, operations and customer service.

In addition, to continue to advance IBTTA's mission to provide a forum for sharing knowledge and ideas to promote toll financed transportation services, we will:

### **1. Position IBTTA as the thought leader on user financed transportation**

How people think about transportation in general and tolling in particular is changing rapidly. And while IBTTA is a small organization, we have the opportunity to be one of the most influential organizations in shaping the debate about the future of transportation.

In the United States, several recent catastrophic events (the explosion of steam pipes in New York City, the collapse of the I-35 bridge into the Mississippi River in Minnesota, and flooding in the New York City Subway system) have focused renewed attention on the dangers of failing to adequately maintain vital infrastructure.

In the past, it was easier to ignore the degradation of our infrastructure. Transportation is not as sexy an issue as health care, education or crime. But recent events have forced transportation back to the top of people's agendas.

As governments and other organizations look for information and answers about tolling, they will seek a trusted source to find the programs, products and services they need. IBTTA has a unique opportunity to assert its role as the preeminent source of information and analysis on transportation in general and user financed transportation in particular. We can be the leader in promoting long-term solutions to the transportation funding crisis and congestion in America and around the world.

- What is the significance of what is happening? How can IBTTA lead the industry and position current and future members to be successful in a dynamic and turbulent marketplace?
- We should strive to be the most influential voice and thought leader on user financed transportation.
- We'll do this by preparing regular position papers and studies perhaps through the foundation.
- We'll use outside contractors and writers to do much of the work.
- Position IBTTA as a "non-partisan source of analysis on hot issues" a la William Archey of the American Electronics Association (see Washington Post, 6-26-07, page A19 "In the Loop" column.)
- We have the ability to educate people who are at different levels of awareness and understanding of transportation about the nature, role, and value of tolling and road pricing.

## **2. Strengthen our meetings and educational offerings**

We have used the last three years to hone our skills in organizing meetings and educational experiences for the toll industry. Appendices A and B provide examples of the many successes IBTTA has achieved in building powerful educational and networking experiences for our members. Over the next three years, we will build on that solid foundation to create:

- Better content by developing and retaining subject matter experts and cultivating more diverse presenters
- Bigger and more diverse audiences through partnerships with allied organizations
- More international perspectives and participation

## **3. Enhance our data warehouse and related information products**

The data warehouse is the foundation for a host of products and services for our members. The first year of data has been collected. Now we focus on expanding the data collection to include more operators covering a wider geographic area. We also work to improve the ability of our members to drill down into the data to obtain answers to their most important questions. Over the next three years, we will work to:

- Strengthen the core products
- Develop an expanded research arm

- Differentiate free versus for fee products
- Consider whether to perform special consulting on behalf of members on a project or hourly basis
- Develop products to support individual member marketing efforts (external)
- Develop tools to help staff (internal)
- Create a research advisory committee of members

#### **4. Invest in the staff and technology needed to better serve the members**

We have a highly motivated, talented and energetic staff that is committed to the membership and mission of IBTTA and functions as a team. Nowhere is the dedication of staff more apparent than in the results it has delivered over the past three years (see Appendix A). As dedicated and capable as our staff is, it is also now stretched to the limit of its abilities. We have grown the work and revenue of IBTTA significantly over the last three years while growing the staff size only marginally. Therefore, if we want to do more and offer more programs and services to members, we need more resources including people, technology and systems. We propose to add the following staff resources either as employees or contractors:

- Marketing Communications Manager (vacant position that is already in the current plan and budget)
- Marketing coordinator (New)
- Data entry / research assistant (New)
- Virtual PR person (Contractor)
- Subject matter expert to advance meeting content (Content-based consultants)

In addition to staff, we must migrate to a new association management system (AMS). The system we currently use has reached the end of its useful life. The new AMS and related systems will allow IBTTA to better serve the membership and improve internal and external business processes.

#### **5. Reinforce IBTTA's identity as an international organization**

IBTTA is in the process of building a solid footprint in Latin America. The successful Technology Workshop in Santiago de Chile in November 2006 and the planned Toll Road Summit of the Americas in Argentina in March 2008 are solid steps in the right direction.

In spite of these developments, some members hesitate to consider planning a meeting outside the United States because of the challenges it presents to some American travelers. Yet the primary audience for any meeting must of necessity focus on the people in the country or region where that meeting is held. So a meeting in Italy should draw primarily from Italy and surrounding countries and NOT from the United States.

IBTTA meetings are one of the main vehicles for bringing the IBTTA message and services to our members and prospective members. If we don't have a meeting in your country, then probably we are not reaching the people in your country in a meaningful way. This plan calls on the board and committees to reinforce IBTTA's identity as an international organization. It further calls on the board to seriously consider the implications of meeting site selection decisions not only on Americans but on all IBTTA members.

## 6. Move towards a strategic governance model

The members of IBTTA's board of directors are individually and collectively some of the most accomplished and effective leaders in the toll industry. Together they possess hundreds of years of experience in public and private sector management and operations. Coming together to perform as a cohesive governing board is a critical factor in IBTTA's future success.

Effective governance is an important issue because it affects the direction of the association. Governance affects what the board focuses on, how decisions are made, and the quality of those decisions. Governance is not strictly focused on the management and operations of the association. Governance seeks to answer the following questions:

- What good does the association wish to accomplish, for what group of people, and at what cost?
- What is the association's vision? Where does the association want to be in 10 years?
- What changes are likely to happen in our environment in that time?
- What kind of board do we need to achieve the association's vision?

We believe the performance of IBTTA – including staff and volunteers – is directly linked to the

### IBTTA Core Values

- **User Pricing.** We believe that transportation is the cornerstone of civilization and that user-financing is one of the most important forces needed to improve mobility and manage congestion and that we should be the leader in its advocacy.
- **Global Outreach.** We believe there is a global need to improve transportation and therefore, we should be internationally focused.
- **Customer Service.** We believe that our customers who travel user-financed bridges, tunnels, and turnpikes should receive exceptional value in the form of safety, service and convenience.
- **Alliances.** We believe that building strategic alliances and improving communication with others in the transportation industry and with those who benefit from our facilities is vital to realize our vision.
- **Innovation.** We believe that innovations in safety, technology, operations, finance and customer service should be vigorously pursued.
- **Education.** We believe we have a responsibility to develop the transportation leaders of tomorrow.
- **Community.** We believe our members have a responsibility to improve the quality of life of the people who live and work in the communities they serve.

effectiveness of the Board of Directors. To the extent that the Board performs as a cohesive governing body – focusing on strategic mega issues and the future of the industry – then the performance of staff and the organization will increase as well.

The Board of IBTTA does not have a clearly defined governance model that carries it smoothly from one year to the next. The Board has experimented with knowledge based governance and has some exposure to Carver Policy Governance. But the Board does not embrace or use any one model of governance in a consistent way. Effective governance deserves the same kind of attention as the other five areas of this business plan.

## **Conclusion**

IBTTA has achieved tremendous results and is on the verge of even more impressive results. As stated before, we have:

- Positioned IBTTA as a thought leader on transportation and as a serious player in the debate over transportation policy in the U.S.;
- Created the most comprehensive database on toll facilities in the world and positioned IBTTA as the authoritative source on tolling; and
- Strengthened IBTTA's ability to create meetings and develop profound educational experiences for professionals in the toll industry.

As an organization, we strive to be nimble, agile and flexible. We like to think we have earned the trust of the Board as a result our work together over the last three years. If we are faithful to our efforts to achieve the goals set forth in this business plan, our membership will continue to grow and our business development efforts will flourish.

## **Financials**

The goals of the new business plan will require a significant and sustained investment over the next three years. The budget approved by the IBTTA Board on November 28, 2008, outlines the investments we will make in 2008 to advance this business plan.

As of this writing (late December 2007), IBTTA staff are developing proposed budgets for 2009 and 2010 to give greater form and substance to the way in which we will implement the six major business plan initiatives described above.

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