

## CONTRIBUTOR GUIDELINES FOR IBTTA'S TOLLING POINTS BLOG

Have an idea for a blog post? We want to hear about it! Read our contributor submission guidelines below.

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### Is Your Idea Interesting?

If it's either original or not widely known, we're interested. To maximize your blog's chances of acceptance, *please send us a brief description of your idea before you begin writing*: [mcarter@ibtta.org](mailto:mcarter@ibtta.org). Please provide detail on the problem, solution, and results of the issue you are highlighting.

### Purpose

The IBTTA Blog, *Tolling Points*, keeps members up to date on the latest tolling and facility news, research, policy, and trends. It also helps readers stay abreast of progress and perspectives from other fields. As a *Tolling Points* Blog contributor, you're joining a virtual community that keeps the tolling industry connected.

### Audience

IBTTA members are toll operators and the businesses that serve them. However, our IBTTA community also includes policy makers, engineers, technologists, legal, media and other transportation practitioners.

### Formats

**Commentary:** Raise a question, respond to a post in the news in the tolling industry, or share your opinion on a relevant issue. **Example:** Here is a [blog post from IBTTA](#) in response to New York Times article entitled "Why are we allowing the private sector to take over our public works?"

**Research Highlight:** Propose a focused question and summarize highlights from a transportation and tolling relevant paper that you've read recently (or even written yourself). Of interest: articles from journals that may not be read by other infrastructure or tolling facility professionals citing intriguing findings; novel interdisciplinary transportation approaches. Explain why it's important for the tolling industry.

**How To:** Succinctly offer practical tips on how to do something that tolling professionals could benefit from (e.g., visualizing data, engaging policymakers, etc.).

### **Word Count**

For all formats, please try to keep the word count around 500. For certain topics we understand that you may need to exceed this word limit. Please contact us if you feel this is the case.

### **Style & Tone: Tips**

- Make your point quickly. Establish a big picture view of your topic and the issue at hand in the opening paragraph.
- Write for an online reader. Consider the mobile devices and laptops most readers use – and keep paragraphs short. Use subheads and bulleted lists to break up content.
- Use a conversational, engaging style. Imagine you are talking with your reader or writing an article to be read on the radio. How would you keep their attention? Use stories, examples, and analogies to illustrate your points.
- Avoid jargon and use plain language that any researcher can understand. Please consider that terms that are common in your field may be unfamiliar to someone from a different field; it's best to define such terms upon first use.

### **Links**

Successful blogs provide readers with “value-added” resources and useful links. Readers love being able to take a deep dive into a topic that piques their interest! Use links wherever possible rather than endnotes or footnotes.

### **Photos, Graphics & Multimedia, Video**

Include relevant photos, charts, maps, data visualizations, animations, or data simulations. Video and multimedia especially enhance reader engagement.

**Copyrighted v. Stock Content:** You may want to search Google Images and iStock for material that is labeled for reuse or for noncommercial reuse: click on “Search Tools” and “Usage Rights” to perform a search. You can also find legally reusable images in Wikimedia, Flickr, and other image sites. Please provide the source of all graphics and media you supply.

### **Headlines**

We welcome headline ideas, which will be edited for length and online searchability.

### **Byline & Bio**

Please include a 20-25-word bio and headshot or infographic.

### **Send & Submit**

Submit your blog post by emailing it to Mimi Carter, Senior Communications Consultant at [mcarter@ibtta.org](mailto:mcarter@ibtta.org).

### **What happens when you click Send?**

We will respond to your submission in a timely fashion, carefully reviewing your blog, and contacting you with suggestions and questions to maximize your post’s appeal.

**If your post is especially time sensitive, please note this in your email’s subject line!**