



IT Carlow
Smarter Travel Campus

Digital Marketing (CW_HHMKT_B) Y4 DIGTH4402

Institute of Technology Carlow
Carlow, Ireland

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Executive Summary

ECO-Ride is focused on targeting full-time IT Carlow students that live within a 3 km radius of the campus area. The purpose is to change behaviour and limit the amount of students who drive or get a ride to campus. By choosing a hybrid bus service that offers convenience to the students, the goal is to decrease the pressure on the parking lot, reduce the amount of emissions and offer a more accessible solution for students.

This report is created using data collected from the Student Travel Survey in order to gather the research needed and help identify the target audience. Additional research was conducted to identify trends, how to communicate to the target audience and any competitors.

The Big Idea: to provide a convenient solution for students travelling to the IT Carlow that is reliable, all while decreasing the effect on the environment and reducing the students' carbon footprint.

In conclusion, an analysis of resources, costs and a budget have been drawn up. The use of key digital platform channels helps keep the costs down, but still create significant promotion of the ECO-Ride.

Introduction

By analysing how students and staff travel to work and class, the students will create a campaign in an attempt to change the current behaviour and reduce the number of private cars driven to IT Carlow. This is an important issue around the IT Carlow, as currently there are no shuttle services offered by the IT, only private companies. However, these do not operate around Carlow Urban region so students and staff are left with little option.

Formulating a plan that focuses on the problems (congestion, carbon emissions and parking issues at the College), and the causes of driving to work/ school. The proposed campaign by the students is to create a bus shuttle that will run during peak travel times, in a 3km radius of the IT. The bus will be a hybrid bus, reducing the emissions and offering a service that limits the effect on the environment. The shuttle bus will be called ECO-Ride.

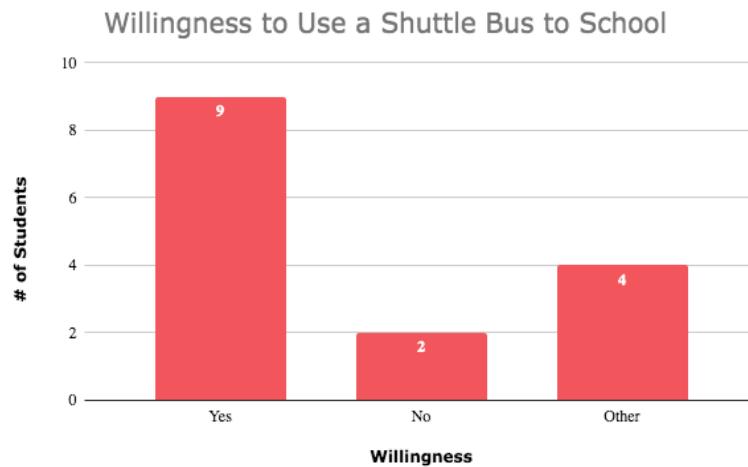


Figure 1: Mini Survey Results

The campaign will be created through a poster, an Instagram page, a Facebook page and will be managed by a Hootsuite content management system. The content strategies are broken into categories; awareness about the campaign, education about environmental problems, the benefits of using a shuttle and finally the membership content (referrals and sampling the ride). Creating these channels improves the ECO-Ride engagement by connecting to the target audience.

Situational Analysis

Industry Analysis - Key Macro Trends

Political & Change in Laws Pushing Development

According to the EirGrid Strategy (2019), it is the Irish Government's 2019 Climate Action Plan to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. This movement is inline with Ireland's attempt to meet their Sustainability Goals. Currently, the government is drafting new laws to ban the sale of diesel and petrol by 2030, (Aisling Kenny, 2019). With this drastic change approaching, the hybrid, pure electric and battery vehicles market will develop. Local authorities have been tasked to build 200 on street electrical ports per year, for RTE (Kenny, 2019).

Energy & Emissions Affecting the Environment

According to the Transport Trends Report, (2019), the transport sector emitted 12 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2017. The transport sector is the second largest contributor to GreenHouse Gas emission at 19.8% after agriculture at 33%. The use of private cars are the largest source of GHG emissions making up 51.5% of total transport emissions (Department of Transport, 2019). On the positive, the number of Electric Vehicles (EV) increased during 2018 with 2006 new cars registered. A growth of 119.5% from 2017. Privately owned vehicles make up 96% of the increase in EV on the Irish Roads. The EV trend continues to grow due to easier availability, falling prices, more access to charging ports and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's (SEAI) at home electric port grants. The Irish Government is influencing change and making the purchase of Electric Vehicles easier, (Department of Transport, 2019).

There is an increase in the demand for more attention to be paid in the limiting of emissions, increased sustainability and transit options. 47% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with using sustainable transport if it was available.

Travel Patterns

The Transport Trends Report discusses how the Irish generally travel, with buses being the most extensive used public transport in Ireland. Public Bus operators facilitated 219million journeys in the years 2017 (Department of Transport, 2019). The use of public transport is the norm in Dublin, with private cars carrying less than 30% for the first time (The Journal Ireland, 2018). However, outside the major cities in small towns of 10,000 and over, only 8.95% used

public transport in 2016 with 63% of the population using cars to travel to work, (Central Statistics Office, 2016). Carlow has a population of 24,272.



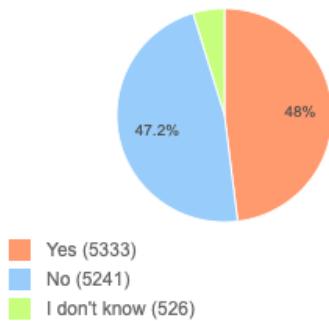
(The Journal Ireland, 2018)

Technology Trends

A Future with Self-Driving Public Transport

Autonomous Vehicles (self driving transport) is one of the largest developments in the technology of transport in private vehicles and public transport services. Ford recently agreed with the city of Austin, Texas to launch commercial transport service in a self driving hybrid vehicle equipped to carry goods and people, (The Journal Ireland, 2019). Integrating Autonomous Vehicles into Ireland may cause some concern, as per a poll by Journal Ireland (2019), 47.2% of respondents said that self driving cars should not be legal on Irish roads. However, eventually this Artificial Intelligence will be integrated into everyday travels. Currently, vehicles are already able to detect lane correction, potential collision detection, and automated parking.

Poll Results:



(The Journal Ireland, 2019)

(Jacobs, 2019)- A self driven hybrid public transport bus in Paris.

Hybrid Public Transport

The Electric Bus market grows (including pure electric, hybrid electric and plug-in hybrid) in an attempt to reduce the dependency on fossil fuels. According to McCarthaigh (2019), after successful trials in Dublin and Cork, the use of electric vehicles are being taken seriously in public transport developments. The plan is to phase out diesel buses in major cities.

The Sustainability Mobility Report (2019) by the (The Department of Transport, 2019), estimates that more than “80% of nitrogen oxide emissions from bus fleets in cities could be reduced by the phasing out of existing diesel models by 2030”.

Transport Options in Carlow

Apart from established companies, namely JJ Kavanagh & Sons, Irish Rail and Taxi companies, IT Carlow does not have a shuttle service or student transport service to transport students around the IT Carlow, Carlow town and student residential areas. There is a need for an increased mobility around IT Carlow.

The Problem at IT Carlow

Identifying the problem has allowed the students to come up with a campaign. According to the Student Travel Survey, 43.5% of the survey respondents, drive a car to school. Aside from the inconvenience of finding parking spaces, this has a major effect on the environment. Currently, Ireland is in the top three countries in the European Union that has the highest emissions of greenhouse gas coming from houses and cars (O’Sullivan, 2019).

Carlow is heavily populated with students. With almost 43.5% of the surveyed students identifying that they drive to school, creating a change in their behaviour can be beneficial. There are no close bus routes to the school for 64% of the survey respondents.

Another survey was conducted by the project team on this target audience with a focus on shuttle buses. 60% of the respondents said they would use the shuttle bus to school. 27% of the respondents said they wouldn't use the bus to school, however, they would be willing to use the shuttle if the route went into town. Of those who would use the shuttle bus, 54% would pay between €30- €50 annually to utilize the service.

Travel to IT Carlow Performance

When it comes to the performance of student travel to IT Carlow there are many significant findings. According to a student travel survey, 21% of students strongly agree or agree that public transport to school and back would be convenient. Showing that there is a demand for some sort of public transit when getting from school and back within Carlow. In addition 42% of surveyed respondents also strongly agree or agree that they enjoy walking at least part way to school. This illustrates that students are willing to walk part way to bus stops or pick up points throughout carlow when making their commute to school and back. Furthermore the IT Carlow travel survey goes into talking about sustainable transport and how willing students are to use it. When students were asked about sustainable transport almost 47% feel that it is a great idea to implement when traveling to IT Carlow. According to IT carlows travel survey the most used forms of transportation when going to school currently is public transport at 46%, personal vehicles at 43%, and Car Sharing at 42.18%. This shows that there is major demand for the use of busses in carlow and having more convenient specialized travel routes to IT Carlow and back would be something that students would be interested in.

Customer Analysis

Demographic Information

More than three quarters (77.5%) of the students in IT Carlow are studying for an undergraduate degree (see Figure 1). The top five residential areas that the students are currently living in and travelling from are: Carlow Urban (25%), Carlow Rural (5.5%), Portlaoise (Maryborough) Urban (3.2%), Kildare (2.9%), and Kilkenny Urban (2.3%).

IT Carlow's student demographic is male and female between the ages of 18 and 24. However, the college also has a large mature student population. The most recent report released about IT Carlow's population identified that the current learner population was approximately 7,500, in addition to 800 employees (Higher Education Authority, 2017). At that time, 10% of the full-time student population were international students (Higher Education Authority, 2017).

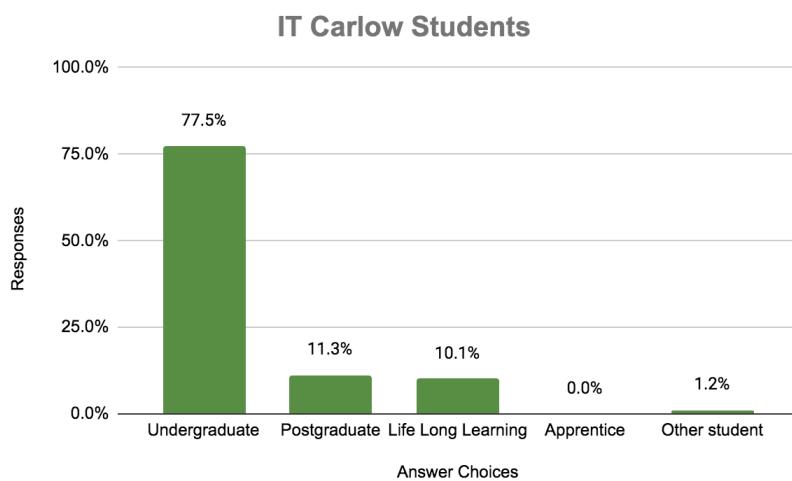
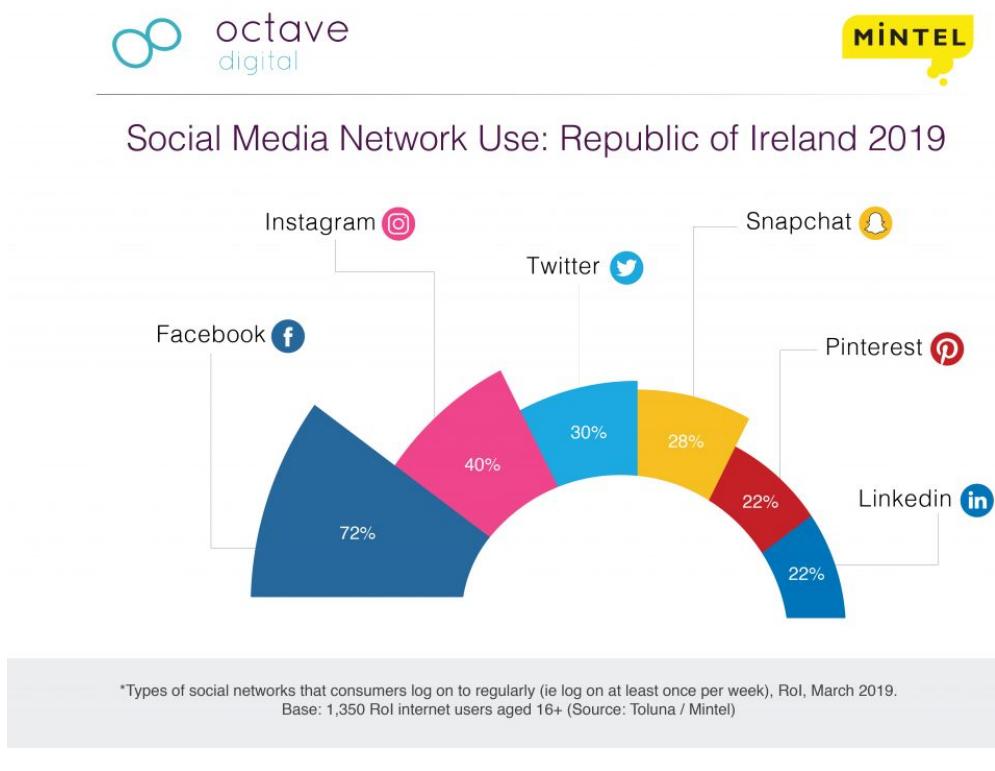


Figure 2: IT Carlow Students

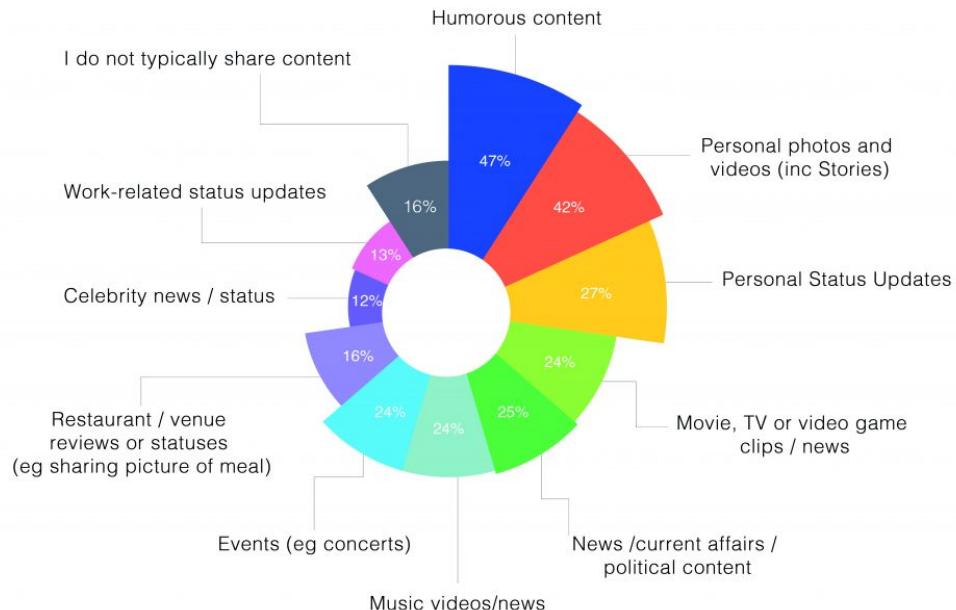
Digital Channel Overview

Mintel conducted a study on internet use with Irish consumers 16 and older. The most common social media channel these consumers use is Facebook (72%), followed by Instagram (40%) (Mintel, 2019 cited in McGarrity, 2019). These consumers favour content that is humorous and/or has a vanity-related appeal (47%) (McGarrity, 2019). Aside from this, these consumers enjoy posting personal media (42%) and updating status content (27%) (McGarrity, 2019).



(Mintel, 2019)

Social Media Content Liked: Republic of Ireland 2019



*Types of content consumers 'like' (eg Private messages, on your profile) on social media networks most often, ROI, March 2019.
Base: 1,318 ROI internet users aged 16+

(Mintel, 2019)



These consumers are immersed in the world of sharing (Antevenio, 2018). They are constantly sharing content about their daily lives on their Snapchat or Instagram stories. This creates an importance on public image and reputation (Antevenio, 2018).

Generation Z are known to be multi-screen users, constantly connected to social networks, and enjoy online shopping/e-commerce (Antevenio, 2018).

Travel to Work Behaviour & Perceptions

The I.T. Carlow Student Travel Survey provides many key insights into the travel preferences and opinions of current students.

Overall, most students live within a moderately short commute to college, as a combined 48.48% live within a thirty minute commute. While 22.83% of students walk to college, Cars are the most preferred mode of transport for the majority of students over half of survey respondents saying they own their own car. Of all survey respondents, 43.45% drive to school by car for the longest portion of their commute, and 18.70% via bus/coach. This is indicative of the distance that most students are commuting each day; while approximately a quarter of respondents travel less than 15minutes to college, the next largest travel up to 30mins daily. This creates a necessity for fast and efficient modes of travel, as the majority of students do not live within comfortable walking distance.

With almost half of respondents driving themselves to school, this increases the amount of automobile traffic on the roads and in the campus car parks. Only 52.58% claim to have a parking spot available to them on campus, indicating that the amount of student drivers exceeds the demand for parking close to campus. In addition to this, over a third of student drivers drive alone to college, leading to more traffic and pollution on the roads. 71.12% of drivers also stated that they do not need access to their vehicle during the school day, meaning that the majority of student cars just sit in the parking lot until students return home at the end of the day.

An increase of public transport or carpooling options would take more individual cars off of the road, effectively reducing the amount of traffic and vehicle emissions. In correlation to this, the survey suggests a willingness for students to try new transport options that may be accessible to them. A combined 52.59 stated that they would be interested in choosing alternative travel methods incentives through carpool-related services such as car-sharing, shuttle service, or trial passes for public transport.

Other sources believe that the growing concern of climate change is another factor influencing students to change their modes of transport. Deloitte's latest *Millennial Report* showed that a significant majority of Irish millennials believe climate change to be one of the most urgent concerns in modern society (Pope, 2019). By introducing a new transport service, with a marketing campaign focussed around the environmental benefits of the service, it is likely that

students for years to come will be more willing to switch to a healthier source of transport to college.

Tone & Language

This campaign targets students at I.T. Carlow directly, therefore it is important for ECO-Ride to communicate their messages most effectively to this targeted demographic. University students engage with brands that are trendy and relevant. Successful brands keep up-to-date with the latest social trends, news, and language being used by their target audience (Solis, 2019). Students appreciate language from brands with a sense of humour that they themselves are familiar with, using language and terms that they are familiar with while maintaining their professionalism as a brand (Solis, 2019).

A study performed at *Medium.com* states that “71% of consumers are more likely to recommend brands with whom they have an emotional connection” (Sullivan, 2019). Brands must maintain a strong and personal relationship with their audience in order to be perceived as authentic. By engaging directly with their audience through direct messaging and tagging, they maintain their relevancy and show that they are eager to listen to their users. Other tone techniques include the use of ambassadors in their marketing mix, enlisting real-life users to promote the brand in their own circles. This promotes word-of-mouth marketing and instills a sense of trust with the brand and its target audience.

Competitor Analysis

Just Eat Dublinbikes: This initiative first started in 2009. In 2018, they celebrated 25 million journeys and up-to-date there are 29,826,334 journeys (Dublinbikes, 2018). These cyclists now make up 14% of the traffic in Dublin city centre (Dublinbikes, 2018). The result of this project consisted in a large increase of cyclists and was noted to be an important catalyst to reduce driving by increasing cycling. There are currently 1600 bikes with 115 stations in all of Dublin and more than 66,000 long term subscribers with 555 short term subscribers (Dublinbikes, 2020). Their key to success was being the first to the market and their partnership with Just Eat. The partnership played an important role in further developing and promoting the campaign (Dublinbikes, 2017).



(Dublinbikes, 2019)

GoCar: The Car Sharing App- users can book via the GoCar App. Users can unlock the car with their phone or a Gocard. Keys are in the car, with fuel, insurance and city parking fees included. The service is available in 15 Irish Counties, with over 400 cars in operation. The cars are located in strategic locations ensuring users are a short distance away from the vehicle. The key to GoCar's success is the strong market position they currently have. The service is unique and the only Car Sharing app in Ireland, (GoCar, 2020).



(GoCar, 2020)

Objectives

SMART Communications Objectives

Overall Goal: To change the behaviour of students traveling to school by educating.

SMART Objectives:

1. Attain 3 hybrid or fully electric shuttle busses by August 2020.
2. Get 50 full-year memberships and 20 semestered memberships by the end of September 2020.
3. Have at least 200 users by the end of the 2020/21 school year.
4. Gain 400 followers on all ECO-Ride social media platforms by the end of the 2020/21 school year.
5. Attain a 30% retention rate from the school year 2021/22 to 2022/23.
6. Obtain memberships from 25% of the total international student population in IT Carlow by the end of November 2020.

KPIs

- # of purchased memberships (semestered and full-year)
- # of referrals
- % of social media engagement
- Click-through email rate
- # of returning memberships

Strategy

Target Audience

Full-time IT Carlow students living within a 3km radius from the school and city centre. This accounts for 28% of the survey respondents. These students currently drive/carpool, get dropped off, or have to walk to school every day. These students are concerned about the environment but don't actually realize how much of an impact they can make by travelling smarter.

Customer Personas

Donal Persona

Donal
22, Male

About: Currently, lives at home with parents in PortLaois. He is an undergraduate student at IT Carlow, studying accounting. He normally gets picked up and dropped off by his parents.

Interests: He enjoys hiking with his family. He is frequently seen at the student union, conversing with friends. He is part of the school hurling team. On his free time, he reads non-fiction books. He is also interested in nature photography.

Motivations & Values: He values healthy living and searches for ways to better his life and those in the community. He is motivated to live an active lifestyle. He is concerned about global warming and climate change but doesn't know exactly how much of an impact he has.

Media Use: He regularly uses Twitter and Instagram. He usually retweets from lifestyle accounts and tweet his opinion daily. On Instagram, he normally posts pictures he takes while hiking and exploring on his profile. On his story, he posts his diet plans and workouts.



Ruth Persona

Ruth

19, Female

About: Currently lives in a student digs, at the bottom end of College Green. It is a 15 minute walk from home to campus. Ruth doesn't like walking in the rain, so feels discouraged to walk when the rain is pouring. She is in first year, studying Sports Science at IT Carlow.

Interests: Enjoys exercising, and is a member of the athletics team. She is on a sporting scholarship. Ruth attends Yoga once a week. Ruth travels home some weekends, but the majority of her weekend time is with friends. Ruth listens to music and reads books to pass time. Her favourite TV show is Grey's Anatomy.

Motivations & Values: Ruth values time with family and friends. Being part of a sports team motivates her to be a better sportswomen. It gives her a sense of achievement, and fulfilment.

Media Use: Uses primarily Instagram. Follows sportswomen and men, celebrities and her friends. She is active on Instagram, posting gym workouts regularly.



Siyabonga Persona

Siyabonga

21, Male

About: International student from South Africa living in off-campus student accommodations within Carlow city center. He is currently in his second year studying International Business of his 4 year program. Walks 30-40 minutes to get to school every day.

Interest: He enjoys taking part in extra Currier activities like helping organize the cultural shake up club at IT and joining the international Gaelic team. Trying to connect and take part in his local community as much as possible.

Motivations & Values: Coming from a self-sustaining farming family he learnt the value of money young and was brought up with a deep respect for nature and his surroundings. Enjoys getting out as much as possible when the weather permits it so he can immerse himself in other cultures within Ireland.

Media Use: He regularly uses Facebook to keep in touch with his friends and family back home. As well he uses it to keep informed about his clubs, activities, and major activities within Carlow.





Online Value Proposition

By using attention-grabbing campaigns and incentives that appeal to students, the goal is to change the students' behaviour with how they travel to school and educate them on their impact on pollution and global warming.

Tagline: The Solution? Less Pollution.

Brand Values



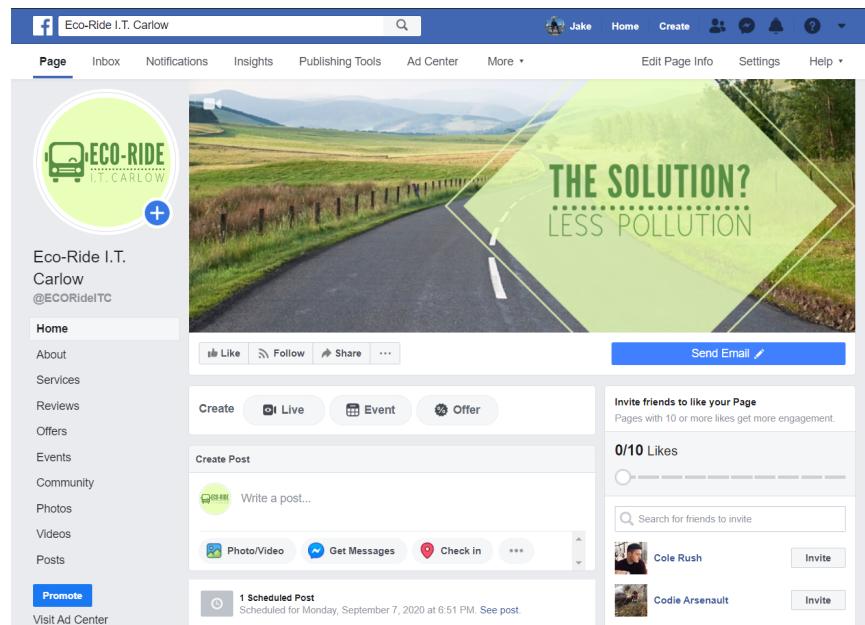
Our logo and tagline reinforce these values. These brand values can be seen by providing a service that allows students to travel around town in a convenient manner, while also reducing the number of cars on the road to reduce the carbon footprint.

Tactics/Actions

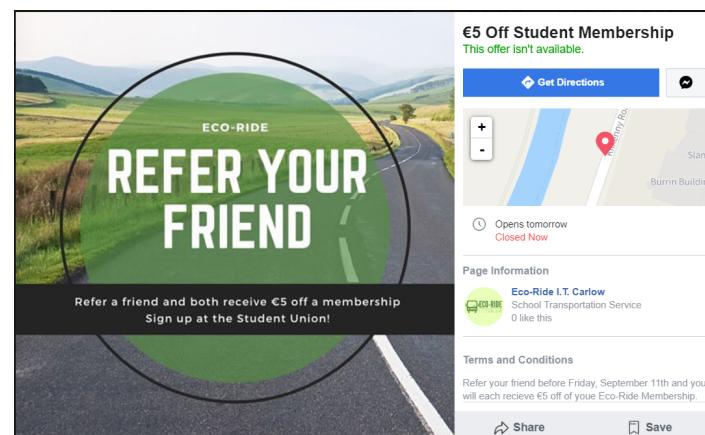
Content Plan

ECO-Ride Facebook and Instagram pages are created to reach the audience. As mentioned earlier, Facebook and Instagram are the most commonly used social networks for this audience.

Facebook Page: ECO-Ride



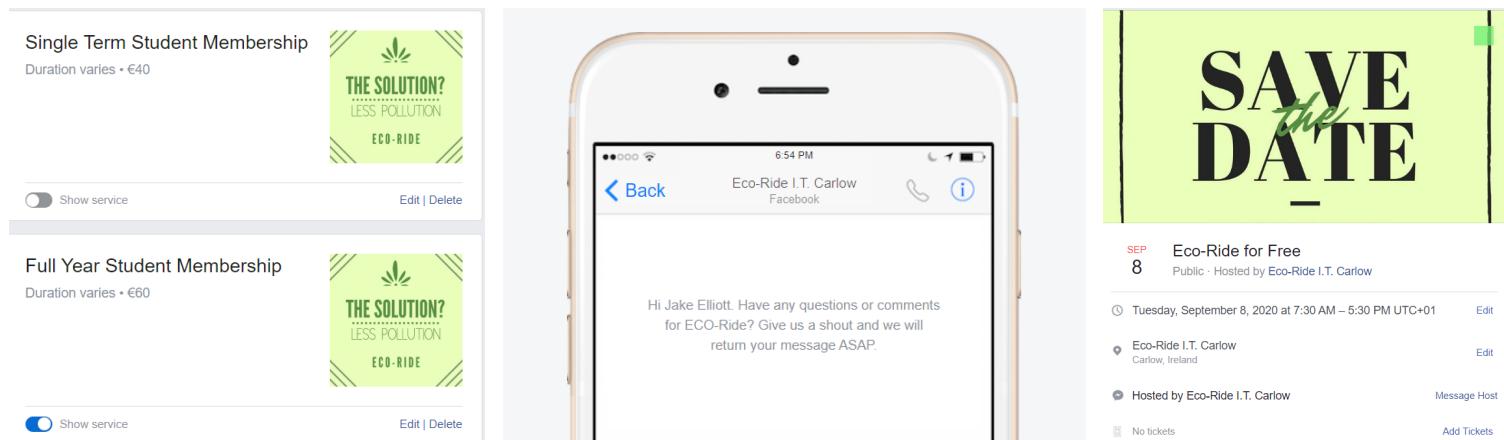
The Facebook page shares similar themes and messaging as the Instagram account, with the addition of increased features and functionality. Through this page, users have more access to Eco-Ride's service information and contact details. Posts to the Facebook page are consistent with Instagram, and both accounts are linked to each other for easy access.



Posts to Facebook have updated formats and styles to take advantage of platform functionality. Links to related news articles and other sources are posted directly to the feed, with the purpose of informing audiences of current trends. For these posts, captions are made in longer, and more formal sentences than the Instagram account.

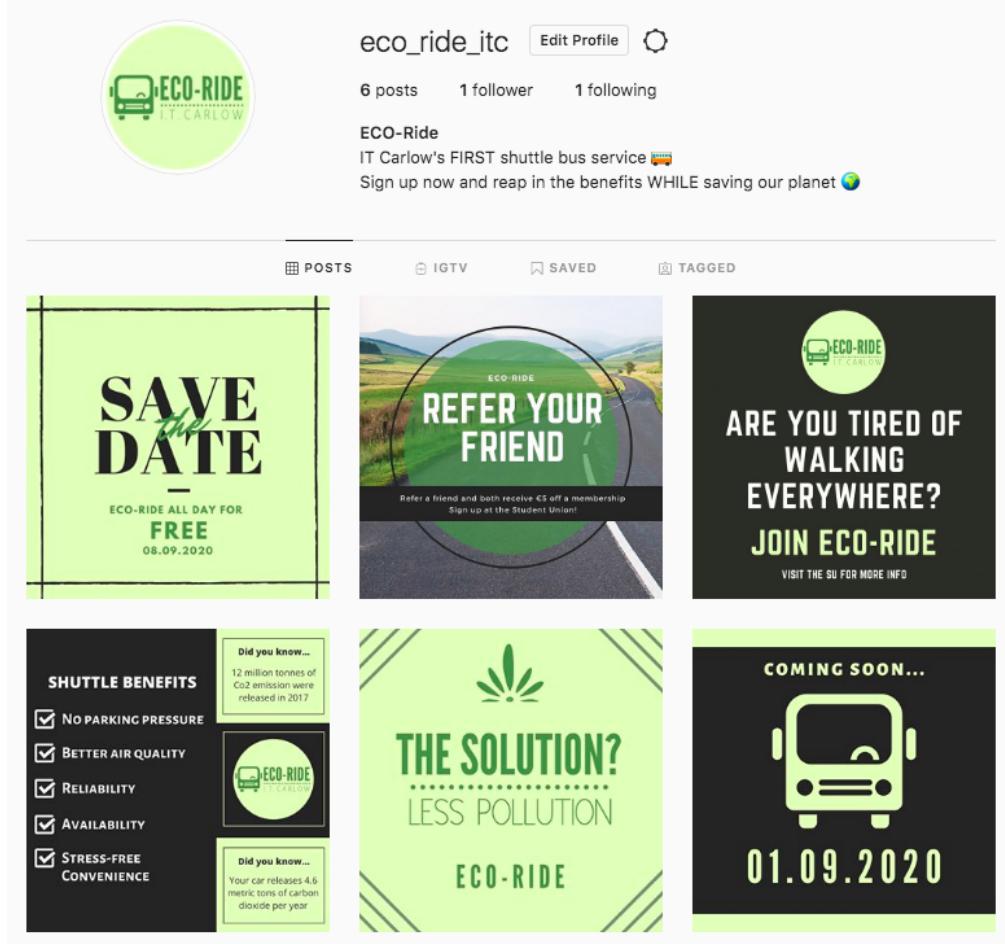
The Refer Your Friend campaign has been made into an ‘Offer’ post on this page, providing users with directions to where they can purchase memberships. They can also access the company messenger and email address through links on the offer to ask questions directly to ECO-Ride. Similarly, the Ride For Free campaign has been made into an ‘Event’ posting. This allows users to save the date of the event, and share their event status with their friends.

Through this event link, users can see how many people are ‘going’, ‘interested’, or ‘not going’.



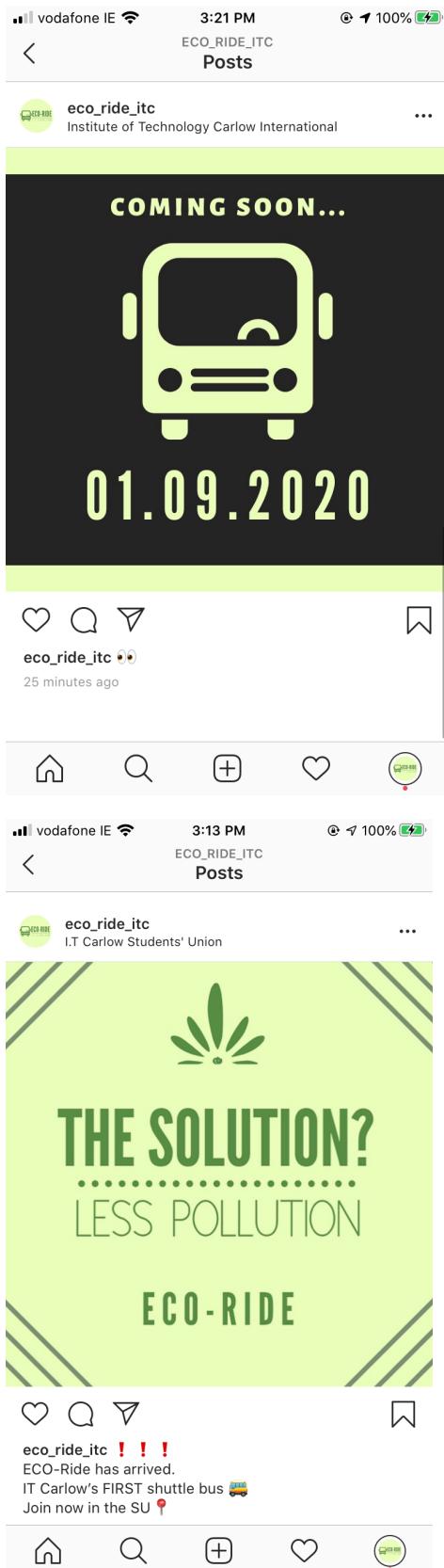
Additional Facebook features include the ‘Services’ tab. For ECO-Ride, this includes links and information to the two types of memberships currently being offered. As additional campaigns are curated, and different offers/membership types are created, this tab will be updated to reflect changes. Another key feature of Facebook is their messaging capabilities. Through ‘Advanced Messaging’ settings, users who wish to message the page are greeted with a personalized message which encourages them to contact the site. The message also ensures that a representative will be in contact shortly. In order to increase the trust and personalization of this messaging feature, responses show the first name and last initial of the responder representing ECO-Ride.

Instagram Handle: eco_ride_itc



The content pillars that are used to drive the content strategy are:

- Awareness: about ECO-Ride, try-it-free
- Education: environmental problems
- Membership Subscriptions: referral campaign, international students



Before the ECO-Ride initiative is launched, this teaser content will be posted to entice curiosity and suspense. This will be the first post on both Facebook and Instagram.

This content item promotes the brand's tagline: The Solution? Less Pollution. The caption grabs the reader's attention and also the use of Emojis relates well to the student's language and tone used on social media. The caption also informs where they can sign up.

This is a screenshot of a Facebook post from the page 'eco_ride_itc'. The post features a dark-themed card with the following content:

- SHUTTLE BENEFITS**
- NO PARKING PRESSURE**
- BETTER AIR QUALITY**
- RELIABILITY**
- AVAILABILITY**
- STRESS-FREE CONVENIENCE**

Did you know...

12 million tonnes of Co2 emission were released in 2017

Did you know...

Your car releases 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year

The post includes standard Facebook interaction icons (like, comment, share) and was posted 13 minutes ago.

This is an educational content example that will be posted to remind students of the benefits of using ECO-Ride shuttles. The purpose of this is to educate the students to derive a change in behaviour. This will be posted on both Instagram and Facebook. The Facebook post will have a brief message that also includes a link to a report by Transport Ireland that provides more educational information to those who are interested.

This is a screenshot of a Facebook post from the page 'eco_ride_itc'. The post features a dark-themed card with the following content:

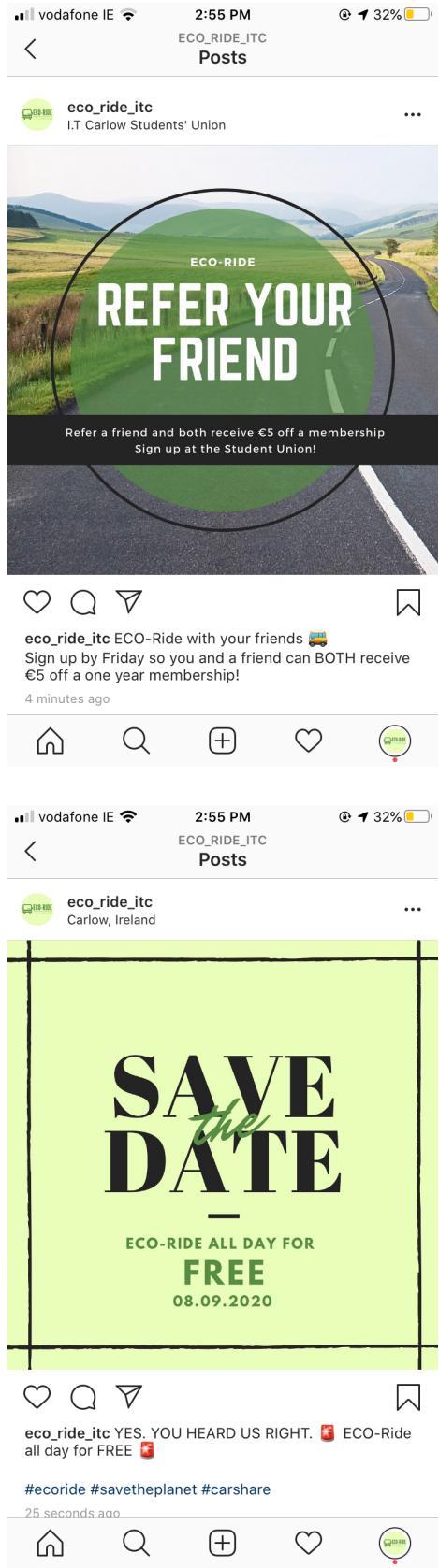
eco_ride_itc Carlow, Ireland

ARE YOU TIRED OF WALKING EVERYWHERE? JOIN ECO-RIDE

VISIT THE SU FOR MORE INFO

The post includes standard Facebook interaction icons (like, comment, share) and was posted 7 minutes ago.

This content is to bring awareness of ECO-Ride to international students and other students who are not living at home. The focus is on convenience and reliability, while also reminding the user of this eco-friendly option.



This is a referral campaign within ECO-Ride. The purpose of this content is to increase membership sign ups. By referring a friend, students can save €5. The addition of a deadline creates a sense of urgency.

On September the 8th, students will have the opportunity to try ECO-Ride for free, all day. This will gain awareness and interest by allowing students to test out the convenience of ECO-Ride without giving anything up. "Free" is very appealing to students.

Control

Management dashboards

Instagram Scheduled Posts: September 2020

The screenshot shows the Hootsuite Content dashboard for Instagram. The left sidebar includes options like Publisher, Planner, Content (selected), Promote, New Post, and Upgrade my plan. The main area displays five scheduled posts from the account @eco_ride_itc:

- Drafts
- Scheduled
- Past Scheduled
- Require Approval
- Expired Approvals
- Rejected
- Content Sources:
 - RSS Feeds
 - Bulk Message Upload
- Try Bulk Composer BETA
- Get the Hootsuite Chrome extension to quickly share links on the web.
Install Extension

Post	Author	Status	Date	Image
Coming Soon	@eco_ride_itc	DRAFT	Sep 30, 1:00 pm	
THE SOLUTION?	@eco_ride_itc	DRAFT	Sep 28, 5:10 pm	
SHUTTLE SERVICE	@eco_ride_itc	DRAFT	Sep 21, 5:10 pm	
ARE YOU TIRED OF	@eco_ride_itc	DRAFT	Sep 14, 1:00 pm	
REFER YOUR FRIEND	@eco_ride_itc	DRAFT	Sep 7, 1:00 pm	

Facebook Scheduled Posts: September 2020

The screenshot shows the Hootsuite Content dashboard for Facebook. The left sidebar includes options like Publisher, Planner, Content (selected), Promote, New Post, and Upgrade my plan. A message at the top right says "Pssst! Looking for your old drafts? Find them here". The main area displays five scheduled posts from the account @Eco-Ride I.T. Carlow:

- Drafts
- Scheduled
- Past Scheduled
- Require Approval
- Expired Approvals
- Rejected
- Content Sources:
 - RSS Feeds
 - Bulk Message Upload
- Try Bulk Composer BETA
- Get the Hootsuite Chrome extension to quickly share links on the web.
Install Extension

Post	Author	Status	Date	Image
Coming Soon	@Eco-Ride I.T. Carlow	DRAFT	Sep 28, 1:30 pm	
ARE YOU TIRED OF	@Eco-Ride I.T. Carlow	DRAFT	Sep 14, 1:00 pm	
SHUTTLE SERVICE	@Eco-Ride I.T. Carlow	DRAFT	Sep 7, 1:00 pm	
REFER YOUR FRIEND	@Eco-Ride I.T. Carlow	DRAFT	Sep 1, 1:00 pm	
SAVE DATE	@Eco-Ride I.T. Carlow	DRAFT	Sep 1, 1:00 pm	

Key performance indicators on facebook and instagram social media platforms:

1. Engagement
2. Followers
3. Impressions
4. Content/Posts Shared
5. Retention rates
6. Facebook insights
7. Instagram insights

Resources

Internal

Resources	Frequency	Cost (€)
Hootsuite Account	Monthly	29.00
IT Carlow Website	-	Free
Social Media Pages	-	Free
Poster Printing	Per page	.5
Total Cost	Monthly	29.00 + 0.5x

External

Resources	Quantity	Cost (€)
Hybrid Bus	1	186,666.00*
Drivers x2	Hourly	12.5 x 2 = 25
Total Cost	Monthly	186,666 + 4,000x

*(Ranganathan, 2020)

Grand Total Cost: €186,666.00 + €4,029.00x

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