

Future trends and research needs: a reflection on the TDM 2008 Vienna Symposium

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*4th International Symposium on Travel Demand Management
Vienna-Semmering, Austria
18 July 2008*

Where I am coming from *I take for granted:*

- Travel impacts matter (environment, health...)
- Feasible solutions, if sometimes partial, exist
- The research community has the competence and the good will to have a valuable effect on:
 - the design
 - the implementation, and
 - the evaluation.....of those solutions

I do NOT take for granted:

- That we have enough time to perfect TDM measures to meet contemporary needs without taking some significant risks at implementation
- That in 3 years, TDM as such will still have the political importance that it has at this moment (and not just because of changes in the party in power)
- That 5 years from now, such a face-to-face international meeting as this will be affordable to the majority of us here

**My reflection –
not a research shopping list
(**your** wisdom from papers *and* coffee breaks!)**

1. Boundaries
2. Wise evaluation
3. The opportunity of now

=> *Do we know what business we are in?*

1. Boundaries

- We identify, sometimes push, boundaries around *sets of effects, geographical area and time-scale*
- We are boundary spanners: with exception of ecosystem impacts, you have touched just about everything in this meeting
- Our research must pay attention to:
 - Perverse effects often ignored as “out of scope”
 - Migrating effects (next county, next year...)
 - The creativity of the people to adapt/invent
 - “Natural experiments”, announced and surprising
 - The social and cultural meaning of what we encourage

2. Wise evaluation

- TDM phenomena are sensitive, complex and dynamic
- The old warhorse of before/after versus controlled evaluation – and the time scale of “after” is critical
- Templates – how transferable (especially to low-income countries)?
- The logic of “cradle to grave” (full chain) evaluation and the appropriate use of intermediate criteria
- The centrality of feedback (how, how often?):
 - to individuals and communities (culturally appropriate?):
this is a 2-way street
 - to governments and their experts

3. The opportunity of NOW

- In many countries, the Zeitgeist now supports integrated, fairly complex, idiosyncratic local solutions
- Many people are facing the re-organisation of their lives, making individualised approaches relevant – and this NOT just about car-use!
- At the same time, mobility-relevant products are evolving fast:
 - Cars versus mobility/information service packages
 - Expect surprises in how people exploit technologies:
(for example: the mobilisation of ad hoc Internet communities; mobile phone credit transfer as private micro-banking in some countries)

3. The opportunity of NOW (continued)

- The personal challenge of being a researcher:
 - Scientific respectability versus “getting on with the job” of supporting those who intervene
 - Making sense out of the need for *integration* when we were trained to decompose problems
- This Symposium has reinforced the notion that voluntary change is not only possible, but that researchers can have something to do with it!

3. The opportunity of NOW (final)

- Getting the stage of research's role right:
 - *Short term*: Free the hostages! (i.e., accept some suboptimal solutions to sources of paralysis)
 - *Medium term*: support complex experiments at the local level, using intermediate evaluation criteria as needed to diagnose and improve
 - *Long term*: build the payoff evidence; shift the planning ethos; incorporate what is learnt into the specification of the best integrated modelling tools then available; get decision-makers involved in interpreting the *sensitivities* that models reveal.....

Endpoint: Sammer's "Experience + Vision"

- No one has a monopoly on truth – or on misconception
- In 10 years, it will be much more important that the people on the front line (mayors, planners, community leaders) *trust the researchers* than to remember than who gets the most credit

Endpoint: “Experience + Vision”

- What business are we in?
 - *Research, Development, yes, but also Interpretation and Innovation*
- Whether in the action agencies, the universities or the consultancies, we can and must train younger scientists to be “wise guiders” of intervention
- I am confident in your good will: *you can make a difference*

Danke schön
Merci
Thankyou