

8th MARKETING & COMMUNICATION WEBINAR 21st of April 2021

Marketing campaigns and actions to promote toll road infrastructure

The 8th Marketing and Communication Webinar, that brought together over 90 participants from 20 countries, was an opportunity for ASECAP members to share information, their best practices and innovative services concerning their customers initiatives and activities. This year, the event provided an insight into the marketing and communication initiatives that have been undertaken by road operators to face the pandemic crisis both internally and in their contacts with their customers.

Malika Seddi, ASECAP Secretary-General

Mrs Seddi reminded that the objective of ASECAP Marketing Workshops is to build a strong community network amongst ASECAP members and share views on best practices, successes, but also failures and learn from each other. This workshop edition is dedicated to the initiatives undertaken by road operators during the pandemic, but focus will also be on other projects that are not related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Massimo Schintu, ASECAP President

Mr. Schintu said that this webinar was an excellent opportunity to get a better understanding how the toll operators efficiently and quickly responded to the pandemic crisis, always having in mind the objective to ensure the continuity of the service to their users. ASECAP Road operators represent more than 87,000 km of motorways across 21 member Countries and indeed, since the beginning of the pandemic, they have all put in place communications and marketing initiatives to face the emergency, while always looking to the future in ensuring sustainable and resilient mobility to toll highways' users. Since March 2020, the ASECAP governing bodies met regularly, though virtually, to exchange updates, provide information, to get knowledge on how in the different countries our operators were coping with the crisis and also how they were communicating and interacting with the users, the stakeholders, the public Institutions. This exchange has been – and it is still – very informative and meaningful for all of us.

Emanuela Stocchi, ASECAP COPER II President

Prior to introducing the panel, Mrs Stocchi briefly commented the objectives of the webinar, underlining that communications initiatives and marketing actions were even more than ever needed during this still lasting period of pandemic emergency, that affected a lot the road sector and during which communicating in an efficient way has been a key element.

Key points highlighted by the speakers in their presentations

The workshop provided the opportunity to hear the presentations from the following experts:

- **Christophe Boutin**, ASFA (France)
- **Susana Agarez**, BRISA / APCAP (Portugal)
- **Ana Serrano**, SEOPAN (Spain)
- **Helen Tirogianni**, Attikes Diadromes / HELLASTRON (Greece)
- **Nelly Girlanda**, A4 Holding S.p.A. / AISCAT (Italy)
- **Marta Sanchez**, BRISA / APCAP (Portugal)
- **Konstantinos Antiochos**, Olympia Odos Operation S.A. / HELLASTRON (Greece)

Christophe Boutin, ASFA (France)

“Ensuring service continuity during pandemic”

Christophe Boutin described the different actions that have been undertaken by French motorway operators to guarantee service continuity to road users during their pandemic and in particular during the lockdown. They continued to ensure their essential operations. However, they had to adapt to the new situation and they developed innovative projects, especially due to the fact that restaurants were closed. They created several new services as solidarity actions to support truck drivers: installation of washing machines and dryers, food trucks and Covid-19 testing zones at borders; dedicated broadcast services on motorway radio. Other actions include the distribution of hygienic kits for customers, and toll reimbursement for the commutes of healthcare workers.

Road operators in France have brought a major contribution to the economy by ensuring the continuity of services for truck drivers. If they had failed, the economy would have collapsed.

Christophe Boutin

Susana Agarez, BRISA / APCAP (Portugal)

“Via Verde Electric - EV charging in BRISA Motorways”

Susana Agarez presented the deployment plan of EV charging on Brisa motorway. BRISA has been working to provide higher quality services such as the Colibri restaurant chain, and now EV charging in a view to foster electric mobility in Portugal. After the electric own fleet, PV infrastructure, LED conversion, the implementation of this new e-charging network is another step in the decarbonization commitment by BRISA - net zero GHG emissions by 2045. Susana Agarez presented the electric mobility project “Via Verde Electric” on the BRISA motorway network. More specifically, she provided information about the competitive advantage of EV charging; the choice of the location of the charging zones; the types of chargers installed; the partners of the Brisa project; upcoming measures to facilitate payment of vehicle e-charging via the Via Verde App.

A love brand is recognized by its customers as being part of their everyday lives, and that's what we work for – to bring relevant services and experiences that make our customer's lives better, safer and easier.

Susana Agarez

Ana Serrano, SEOPAN (Spain)

“Communications and marketing initiatives carried out in Spain in the Covid-19's year”

Ana Serrano provided an overview of the actions and communications plans that have been undertaken by Spanish infrastructure companies during the Covid-19 crisis. They provided technical and logistical assistance, and financial support in the field of health. In addition, they maintained essential services to the population. Also, they have established safety protocols and carried out preventive actions for the performance of the activity of all workers and employees. Specific plans have been developed for toll concessions: free transit through toll roads offered to the Army, patients, medical personnel and supplies; free breakfast and menus for truck drivers; machinery and volunteer staff made available to the government to carry disinfection tasks; awareness campaigns towards road users; measures to protect

employees in toll booths (promotion of contact-less solutions to pay tolls; establishment of automatic and dynamic roads as priority lanes to pay tolls).

The Spanish concessionaires have had an essential role during the pandemic outbreak.

Ana Serrano

Helen Tirogianni, Attikes Diadromes SA / HELLASTRON (Greece)

“Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic: the case of Attica Tollway”

Helen Tirogianni focused her presentation on the different measures that have been implemented by Attica Tollway to respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on transport systems and especially on motorways. Attica Tollway traffic was down by 23.9% in 2020 vs 2019. The company, however, managed to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic by setting up a successful plan. Internal governance measures, strict compliance with governmental protocols, health protection measures and operational guidelines has led to the possible minimum loss on the tollway, as well as to the protection of our employees and clients.

This unprecedented period demonstrated that being agile and adaptive can save business continuity and be the springboard for innovation and digitalization.

Helen Tirogianni

Nelly Girlanda, A4 Holding S.p.A. / AISCAT (Italy)

“Health, safety and service: how we coped with the pandemic crisis”

Nelly Girlanda outlined the internal and external measures that included, amongst others, preventive measures, work team’s reorganization to guarantee employees’ health and ensure safety and service continuity. Also, she put focus on communications and CSR initiatives: the role of the website and social media channels was crucial to provide travellers with information about services organization (prevention measures; operational continuity; commercial services; maintenance works etc.). In addition, initiatives were taken to support hauliers (coffee and shower offered during lockdown periods; testing points on truck parking areas). Other supporting measures were taken such as free motorway access for health workers, free hotel rooms to medical staff. She concluded that road safety remains a high priority: despite the pandemic, the company has continued to follow-up its Road safety activities and to maintain its annual meeting with high school students to raise awareness of this important issue.

A4 Holding cope with the pandemic crisis with key priorities on Health, Safety and Services

Nelly Girlanda

Marta Sanchez, BRISA / APCAP (Portugal)

“Hygienic Marketing – Brisa response to Covid”

Marta Sanchez outlines the impact of the COVID-era leading to marketing acceleration of some trends and the emerging of a new dimension – hygienic marketing. Therefore, Brisa implemented specific actions

in response to these challenging times. From new digital offers to remote work with agile routines, to training sessions and the adaptation of business, the presentation provided an overview of Brisa's teams work in the last year, always keeping in mind the claim "people first" for both employees and customers. She ended her presentation by the digital campaign "OBRIGADO" made to thank all the people, employees, stakeholders, customers for their right behaviour .

More than ever we learned that a marketing plan can quickly shift, and we (marketeers) must be prepared to learn and adapt to the consumer's behaviors and their needs. This resilience fight brings creativity to maximum and work passion, but most of all brand purpose.

Marta Sanchez

Konstantinos Antiochos, Olympia Odos Operation S.A. / HELLASTRON (Greece)

"Bridging the Gap between Conventional Toll Plaza Based Open Tolling Schemes and Distance Based Closed MLFF ETC Schemes: The Olympia Odos Hybrid Toll System in Greece"

Konstantinos Antiochos gave a description of the Olympia Odos Hybrid Toll System which was introduced in January 2021, combining free-flow ETC systems with traditional toll plazas. This is the first distance-based tolling system in Greece and probably the first step before the introduction of a multi-lane free flow r system in the future in the Country. He explained the functionalities of the system and outlined the implications of the introduction of such a system from a technical point of view and from a toll charging perspective. Furthermore, he underlined that the marketing campaign organized for a full month, concurrently with the launch of the new system on 1 January 2021, was of paramount importance to reach out to the users and having successful results despite of the pandemic period. He concluded the presentation by highlighting the benefits of this hybrid system.

Answering the customer expectation for distance based charging, in an open toll system environment with conventional toll plazas.

Konstantinos Antiochos

Q&A session

The session was followed by Q&A, moderated by Mrs Emanuela Stocchi. Also, participants had the opportunity to ask questions to the speakers via the chat. Below, you will find the questions raised and the responses given by the speakers:

1. **Question from Malika Seddi to Susana Agarez:** Who make the investments to deploy all the charging station?
 - o **Answer - Susana Agarez:** The investment was made in partnership also with the same companies, BP, Cepsa, EDP, Galp, Yonity and Repsol
2. **Question from Enrico Ferrante to Susana Agarez:** what is the coverage of charging station on the rest areas and do you have a growth trend of the use of the charging stations for next 2021/2022?

- **Answer - Susana Agarez:** the charging stations are in half of the SA in the Brisa network - almost all of the Colibri AS (20 of the 23)

- 3. **Question from Malika Seddi to Christophe Boutin:** will there be specific actions foreseen by the concessionaires and subconcessionaires to try to regain the trust from customers to come back on service area restaurants?
 - **Answer - Christophe Boutin:** specific actions have been taken, for instance to favor picnic on lawns of service areas. But so far, results are not up to our hopes. We also would like to offer Drive services, but the State is not ready to accept it.

- 4. **Question from Malika Seddi to Konstantinos Antiochos:** how many ETC subscribers do you have in total?
 - **Answer - Konstantinos Antiochos:** 70,000 for Olympia Odos

- 5. **Question from Valentino Jakšić to Konstantinos Antiochos:** are ETC accounts prepaid or postpaid?
 - **Answer - Konstantinos Antiochos:** In Greece all accounts are pre-paid, this is one of the main reasons why a rebate scheme was selected
 - **Question:** in that case, do you have any issues for charging and refunding funds if user has insufficient funds?
 - **Answer:** It is a pre-requisite for the user to have sufficient funds, in order to perform the toll transaction in the toll plaza. In turn, in order to receive a rebate the user must have first paid the toll. So no issues.

Workshop's concluding remarks

Emanuela Stocchi closed the session by thanking all the speakers, participants and ASECAP team. Malika Seddi also thanks all the participants, the ASECAP President Massimo Schintu, ASECAP Past President Christophe Boutin, Bill Halkias and incoming President António Nunes de Sousa. She indicated to the audience that the digital ASECAP Days will be held on 10 November in order to mark calendar. Regarding the 2022 edition of the ASECAP Marketing & Communications Workshop she hoped that it will be possible to have a physical meeting to continue the exchanges. In the perspective of an in person meeting, she launched a call for candidacies in view of hosting the workshop next year.