THREE WAYS RADAR SPEED DISPLAYS HELP YOU MAXIMIZE RESOURCES AND BUDGET

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Introduction

If your agency is like most across the country, you're always looking for new ways to stretch your budget; you may even have developed a real talent for doing more with less in many areas.

When it comes to traffic calming and traffic safety programs, it's not easy to achieve and sustain program goals after budget cuts. It costs money to post officers on busy roads to monitor traffic and enforce speed limits, but it can be difficult to reallocate these resources from other critical duties in order to sit in their patrol cars to identify speeders.

Then there's the issue of ongoing data collection and reporting— traditionally two time-consuming and cumbersome tasks. If you're fortunate to have one or more radar speed displays at your disposal, you know how effective they are at alerting speeding drivers to slow down as well as giving you valuable feedback about the most effective times to conduct enforcement activities. But dispatching someone to drive to each sign to collect data (not to mention check batteries, make sure the signs are where they're supposed to be and that they have not been tampered with) means taking another resource out of the field. That's not always something you can afford to do when staff is already stretched thin.

The public demands a lot when it comes to traffic management, and the pressures and obligation to serve and protect citizens won't decrease, even as funding is being cut. That's why it's important to maximize every resource and traffic device available and find cost-effective ways to leverage technology for both quick wins and long-term results.

In this paper, we'll look at the different ways in which you can enlist the radar display signs you already have to help achieve and sustain improved traffic safety in your community. We'll also introduce you to cloud-enabled radar speed displays, the importance of utilizing ongoing data and analytics for improved traffic calming and safety, and why together, they are perhaps the two most effective traffic calming tools you could have in your corner.

You know that radar speed signs are highly effective tools for alerting drivers to excessive speeds. A driver may speed down the same road each day without even realizing he's breaking the law, but put a sign on that road that displays his individual speed—or even include a message telling him to slow down—and he suddenly becomes aware that he is

driving too fast. If you're not completely convinced, park a patrol car out of sight and watch drivers as they move past the sign. Then, review speed data from the sign for a sixty-day time period before and after implementing your display. You will definitely see a drop in the number of speeders after the sign is in place.

There are other ways you can effectively use your radar speed display that will help you stretch your department's budget, maximize valuable resources and make roads safer for everyone.

For additional reasons why radar displays work so well, download our white paper Five Ways to Calm Traffic—Which is Right for You?

1. Use in place of handheld radar

For law enforcement, it takes considerable personnel to patrol and protect a community's roads, and if your community's agencies are experiencing a hiring freeze or other cost-saving measures, it has probably become a challenge for them to monitor driver speeds effectively.

Stationing an officer on every busy roadway is probably not an option if there are no resources to spare. By setting up a radar speed display in the area you can collect and analyze data first to determine whether an officer with speed detector should be deployed on the road, and you can also consider conducting a traffic study to ascertain whether the current speed limit should be revisited.

2. Clear complaints

Traffic calming and speed enforcement become an even greater challenge when you factor in complaints from citizens and HOAs about a certain street being a haven for speeders.

You know the importance of law enforcement responding to complaints about neighborhood speeding hot spots, and that clearing complaints in a timely matter improves
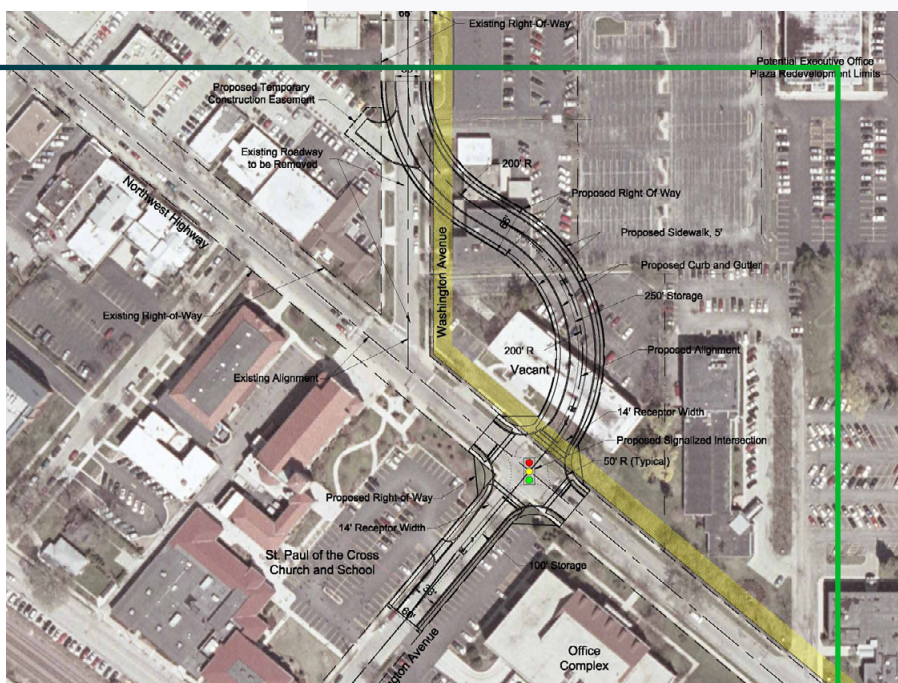
community relations and clears paperwork off desks. Speed radar displays are ideal for clearing this type of complaint. Simply place a display on the road in question, set it to stealth mode and collect speeds without showing drivers how fast they're going or that you're even monitoring traffic at all.

If the data comes back and shows that the majority of drivers are obeying the speed limit and that residents may be overreacting to an increase in neighborhood traffic, then congratulations! You've just made it possible to respond to and clear a complaint without additional personnel. If the data shows there is a problem, you know for certain that it's worth an officer's time to monitor the road and enforce the speed limit.

3. Conduct mini traffic studies

Suppose your town is experiencing growing pains and approaches a group of engineers to add a second lane to a busy road. The engineers inform you that before they can take on the project, you must approach the Department of Transportation first for a traffic study— only the DOT is not convinced there's a need for road expansion.

A radar speed display can help make your case by providing vehicle counts. Place your display on the road to record the number of vehicles traveling on it over a period of time. Then, compile a traffic volume report and present it to the DOT as evidence of high traffic. This tactic is also helpful if you want to petition for a speed limit change in a particular area or to appeal for a traffic signal in a high-speed, high-traffic zone.

Taking it to the Next Level with Web-enabled Radar Display Signs

Radar display signs become even more versatile, and downright invaluable, when they are web-enabled. A web-enabled sign collects traffic volume and speed data and provides analytics which need to be deployed that you can download from any Internet-ready device. No longer will personnel have to be deployed to each sign location to download data, then sort, perform analytics and enter it all into spreadsheets.

If a web-enabled radar display sign sounds like a purchase your community cannot afford, consider the ongoing costs associated with sign-related monitoring and data collection (including travel time) and time spent on data management and reporting. If your radar sign also has variable message capabilities, you can change the message anytime from a laptop, smartphone or tablet.

The efficiencies provided by cloud-based displays and other traffic devices free up personnel to perform their primary public safety duties, while built-in device software monitors hardware and location, and performs the data collection, calculation and analysis.

Here's an exercise you can do that will clearly illustrate the cost savings of just one web-enabled radar speed display. Add up what it currently costs your department on a monthly basis to manually:

- Track sign location
- Change variable messages
- Produce speed and traffic volume reports, charts and graphs
- Replace signs that are tampered with or stolen
- Check sign battery
- Collect, compile and sort data
- Monitor sign for tampering
- Manage data files

Now multiply your total by 12 months and you'll see just how much your current sign may be costing you.

How You Can Use Traffic Data from Your Display

- Track traffic volume and speeds in real time, allowing you to identify which areas are most in need of remediation and deploy solutions immediately

- Provide alerts regarding high speed violators and high congestion

- Validate the need for remediation, such as changes to the speed limit

- Provide DOT study requests

- Help your department prioritize enforcement and utilize resources more effectively

- Gather traffic data for long-term decision making

Web-enabled radar display signs can also alert you to low battery and tampering, saving unnecessary trips to the sign. And because you change sign messages remotely, you don't have to worry about someone breaking into the sign and reprogramming it.

Radar speed displays are a cost-effective and expedient solution to traffic calming which can be a valuable complement to longer-term engineering solutions.

Conclusion

As the costs associated with running an agency or department continue to climb and budgets shrink, you can realize real, ongoing savings by leveraging web-enabled radar speed displays and data to both maximize resources and effectively enforce traffic calming and safety initiatives in your community.

Learn More

Ask us for a **personal demo of TraffiCloud™**, the traffic management solution that lets you control your traffic devices and data from any Internet-ready device— regardless of manufacturer— 24/7 to deliver a new level of awareness while reducing the amount of time needed to manage your traffic devices and information.

For information on our Shield 12 and Shield 15 radar speed displays, our SpeedAlert radar sign with variable message display and our versatile InstAlert variable message displays, contact us today.

Call 866.366.6602 or email us at **sales@alltrafficsolutions.com**

TraffiCloud leverages our patented technology (US Patents 8,417,442; 8,755,990; 9,070,287; 9,411,893) to deliver unique cloud-based management, features and functionality.

All Traffic Solutions delivers cloud-based traffic management solutions, including radar speed and variable message displays, imaging products and intelligent transportation systems for law enforcement, municipalities and communities. Our innovative TraffiCloud™ transportation management platform is changing the way organizations solve their most complex safety, transportation and parking challenges by allowing them to manage all their traffic equipment remotely, as well as leverage data to increase traffic safety, streamline their operations and achieve lasting results.

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