

Hear Every Voice

Case Study: Give a Minute Chicago



Web-based engagement effort in the City of Chicago

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Local Projects, CEOs for Cities, Rockefeller Foundation, Knight Foundation

Project Details

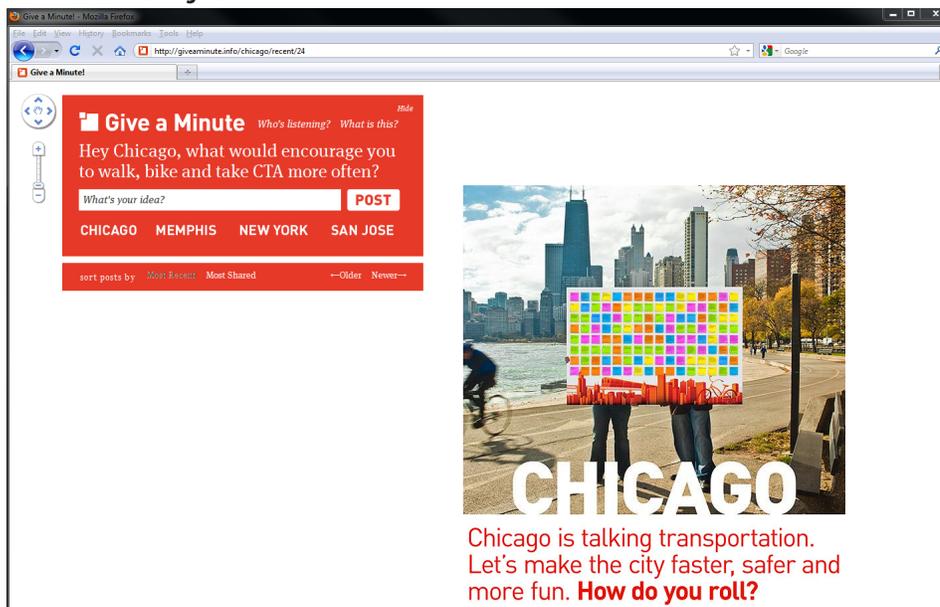
Location

Organizations

Context: The Give a Minute Chicago public participation campaign was launched with the intent of creating a new method of public participation and engaging in conversation at a citywide scale (Urban Omnibus 2010). Project partners Local Projects, CEOs for Cities, Rockefeller Foundation, Knight Foundation, and the Chicago Transit Authority created a platform for Chicagoans to easily provide their thoughts on a specific question, “Hey Chicago, what would encourage you to walk, bike and take CTA more often?”

Case Summary

Give a Minute Chicago website



Source: <http://www.giveaminute.info>

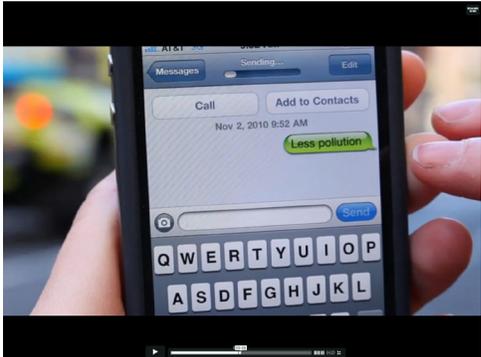
Carol Coletta, president of urban advocacy non-profit CEOs for Cities, wanted to improve upon the traditional community meeting, which she perceived as less than enjoyable for attendees and officials alike (Urban Omnibus 2010). Familiar with the interactive work of Local Projects, she contacted firm founder and principal Jake Barton. Together they crafted an idea to use new technologies to “facilitate a conversation and focusing or structuring that dialogue in a constructive way” (Urban Omnibus 2010). The result is a public engagement platform that is easy to use and widely available.

Internet

Social Media

"For Give a Minute, we wanted to lower the barriers for entry into constructive dialogue focused around positive collective change rather than specific complaints." (Jake Barton interview Urban Omnibus 2010).

Public Involvement: Public Involvement: Give a Minute Chicago launched in the fall of 2010 with the intent of gathering input on one key question from Chicago residents: What would encourage you to walk, bike and take CTA more often? People can participate by text message, Twitter, Facebook, or direct posting at <http://giveaminute.info>. As participants respond, messages are added to a project space in the form of virtual post-its. Anyone can view the posts, sort them by most recent or most shared, and scroll through all posts to date. They are reviewed and responded to by local agencies, nonprofits, and civic groups working on specific issues and the City's top leaders, such as Terry Peterson Chairman of the Chicago Transit Board, Ron Burke Executive Director of Active Transportation Alliance, and Stan Day President and CEO of local bike company SRAM respond to at least one concept each day (Scearce 2011).



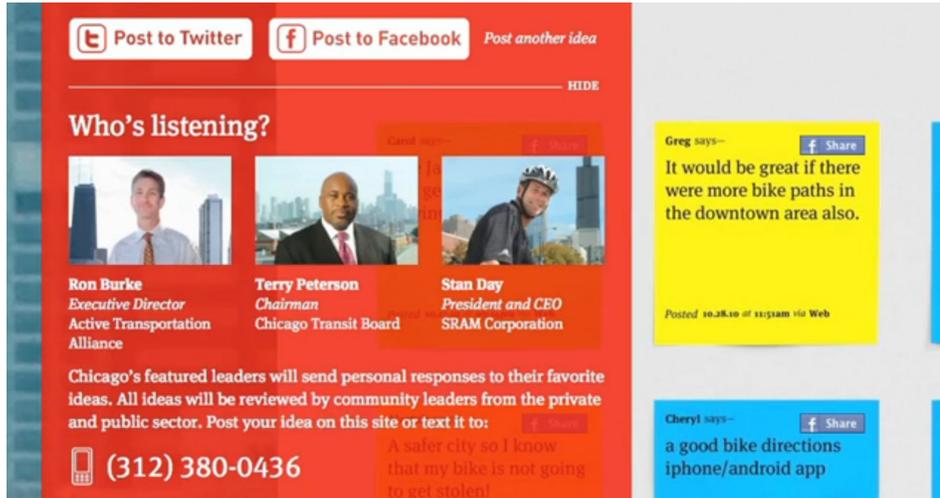
Examples of comments sent via direct posting, Twitter, Facebook, or text message

Source: <http://www.giveaminute.info>

Important to the success of Give a Minute Chicago was an advertising campaign to encourage participation. The project team put ads in the Chicago Tribune and an estimated 500 advertisement placements on buses

and trains were donated by CTA (Urban Omnibus 2010). Social media and an online video were also used to spread the word about Give a Minute Chicago. As of January 2011, 2,893 suggestions were posted and 97 percent were on topic (Scearce 2011).

Give a Minute Chicago allows participants to provide their input on issues in the way that is most convenient to the participant. The online engagement platform was developed to allow participants to view other comments and suggestions and sort the comments in various ways. Additionally, participants can view the names of city leaders charged with reading and responding to posts.



Names and photographs of the featured leaders who respond to comments.

Source: <http://www.giveaminute.info>

The Give a Minute platform can be customized to a particular question, and can be designed so that a participant or city official can sort the information in various ways. The creators of Give a Minute recognize that future efforts can be tailored to better understand common interests and create online communities around specific issues. The Give a Minute campaign has been successful in encouraging a wide range of participants to weigh in on key issues. While it is not intended to supplant more traditional methods of engagement, it does broaden the base of participants who are sharing their perspective on issues in their city. Other cities such as Memphis, New York, and San Jose are launching Give a Minute campaigns to do the same.

Give a Minute is a new kind of public dialogue. It only takes a minute to think about improving your city, but your ideas can make a world of difference. "Give a Minute" is an opportunity for you to think out loud; address old problems with fresh thinking; and to enter into dialogue with change-making community leaders. Soon, you'll also be able to link up with others who have similar ideas and work on making your city an even better place. (www.giveaminute.info)

Scearce, D. 2011. Citizens connected: The power, peril and potential of networks. Retrieved from <http://www.connectedcitizens.net>.

Urban Omnibus. 2010. Give a minute. Retrieved from <http://urbanomnibus.net/2010/12/give-a-minute/print/>.

1. Give a Minute website: www.giveaminute.info

References

Resources

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