Advanced Traveler Information Systems (ATIS) require significant investments for implementation, ongoing operation, maintenance, marketing, and enhancement to keep pace with new technologies. Government agencies—primarily state departments of transportation (DOTs) engaged in ATIS regularly evaluate budgets for ATIS programs. Any budget reductions make traveler information programs vulnerable. Thus, state DOTs always seek revenue opportunities supporting ATIS which has become a critical concern. A public-private partnership is a prominent strategy for ATIS cost management. Moreover, the Federal Highway Administration supports innovative strategies that can have the greatest success in terms of sustainability.

Partnerships between public and private agencies have resulted into various business models, such as public sector funded franchised models, private sector funded, and business-to-business models. These models have considerable success in covering the cost of ATIS operation and maintenance. However, none of the models give a satisfactory or permanent solution to earning revenue for sustainable ATIS programs. ATIS program costs continue to increase and are proven to be challenging, particularly with increasing demands for timely, accurate, and deliverable information in a wide variety of formats. Further, revolutions in cellphone and web-based technologies have attracted private industries to partner with public sector agencies for providing transportation information. Both public and private sector entities are looking for a business model that caters to their revenue needs.

This presentation intends to answer the most critical question—which is the best model to generate enough revenue for supporting ATIS programs? The presentation will focus on:
(1) Fundamentals of ATIS program and various level of business opportunities;
(2) Roles and responsibilities of public and private sectors;
(3) Discussions of pros and cons of existing business models; and
(4) Potential business models for future generation of ATIS programs.

The above topics will be discussed based on the business model studies for the Operation and Travel Information Integration Sharing Project for I-90 and I-94 corridors. These corridors cover eight states from Washington to Wisconsin, covering nearly 2000 miles.