Using Innovative Tools for Public Outreach

CTS Annual Research Conference
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Gridlock Buster

- Developed by ChenFu Liao, Educational Systems Manager, Minnesota Traffic Observatory and ITS Institute
- Version 1.0 of the game developed as part of a National Science Foundation grant to incorporate Web-based simulation modules into undergraduate engineering courses
- Named “My Traffic Kontrol,” the game was a Java-based simulation
Gridlock Buster

• Next iteration was to develop curriculum for high school-aged students that would teach them some basics about traffic engineering, using signal timing concepts as the example
• Hired David Glick, a former high school physics teacher and now an educational development consultant to create the curriculum
• Tested with students during the summer of 2008 at on-campus camps run by the Institute of Technology
Gridlock Buster

- Version 2.0 to be Flash-based
- Hired Web Courseworks, an eLearning firm that specializes in game development for educational purposes
- Create a game designed to hold the attention of its players longer and make it more visually interesting
- Used My Traffic Kontrol as the foundation
- Created a back story and a mentor to provide tips and instructions
Gridlock Buster

- Gridlock Buster was launched in June 2009 and to date has been played 1.9 million times
- Posted to an on-line gaming Web site: www.kongregate.com/games and it went “viral”
- Demonstrated in 2009-2010 at the IT summer camps, the Minnesota State Fair, Lego League workshops on campus, TechFest, and numerous high school visits