

Bicycles are good for Business



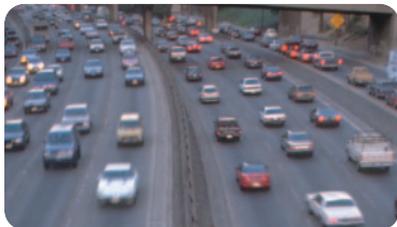
For retailers to be economically viable, shops must offer reasonable access to potential customers. In many parts of Australia, this has primarily involved maximising motor vehicle access. Yet an increasing body of evidence exists suggesting that a more balanced approach, looking at all modes of transport is an important factor affecting the economic health of local businesses.

Not all customers are motorists

There are several important reasons why it makes good business sense to provide excellent bicycle access.

Most shopping precincts in Australia offer a generous supply of car parking spaces. The most dramatic examples can be found in the expansive car parks surrounding suburban shopping malls. It is worth considering whether the provision of such large allotments of space dedicated entirely to car parking is economically sensible.

Cars are the most costly form of transport. The Royal Automobile Club of Queensland estimate the cost of buying a new car every five years



plus running costs adds up to between \$94.78 and \$237.96 per week. Over the course of a year, this amounts to between \$4,929 and \$12,374. These estimates are supported by research conducted by

The good news is that many of the bicycle friendly enhancements actually increase consumer activity and profits

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the NRMA which found the cost of motoring to be within the range of \$5,000 - \$15,000 per year. Motorised transport is clearly a major drain on consumers' potential to spend in other sectors of the economy.

For each additional dollar spent on cars, one less is available for other purchases. In fact the average household spends some 15 - 20% of net income directly on transport. This equates to a significant sum of money not able to be spent in other sectors of the economy. Moreover, with the rise in fuel price, many retail sectors have already recorded a downturn in consumer spending. With the strong possibility of further price rises, the negative effect on consumer spending is likely to intensify.

Thus, it is increasingly important for retail precincts to attract customers without the heavy burden of automotive costs. Cyclists are able to inject higher proportions of their household budget into the local economy.

Bicycle access is important

Providing safe bicycle access and parking facilities in retail areas has received less planning consideration than motorised transport. This is despite the fact that the space requirements of bicycle friendly design are significantly less than that of motorised transport.



Bicycle friendly design involves the provision of bicycle lanes and paths, traffic calming and bicycle parking facilities. The good news is that many of these street enhancements actually increase consumer activity and profits. It is worth remembering that twelve bicycles can be parked in the space occupied by one car. Think of it as eleven extra customers!

Moreover, Australians are choosing to cycle more and a range of Government programs such as 'Travel Smart' are encouraging people to replace some of their car trips with bicycles.

But don't shoppers need a car to carry their purchased items?

Contrary to popular belief, shoppers seldom purchase items exceeding the comfortable carry capacity of a bicycle. In fact only a quarter of motorists leave a retail area with two or more bags of goods.

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As the costs of motoring rise and the benefits of cycling continue to grow, providing bicycle friendly access to customers will become increasingly important and indeed profitable!

What can retailers do to attract consumers by bicycle?

- Provide safe and convenient bicycle parking
- Develop a Transport Access Guide (TAG) that includes cycling routes and bicycle parking. This could be part of the marketing plan for the business or shopping center
- Promote yourself as a bicycle-friendly business
- Provide home delivery service



A *Transport Access Guide* including cycling routes and bicycle parking could be part of the marketing plan for your business or shopping center.

The local council and other closely located shops, restaurants etc could be interested in doing a joint proposal.

What can you do?

- Ride your bike!
- Ride with others
- Cycle for short trips to shops, parks, work, visiting friends or for fun
- Talk and write to your local council, state government or authorities for better cycling infrastructure or policies
- Join a cycling organisation

Bicycle NSW	www.bicyclensw.org.au	02 9218 5400
Bicycle Queensland	www.bq.org.au	07 3844 1144
Bicycle SA	www.bikesa.asn.au	08 8232 2644
Bicycle Tasmania	www.biketas.org.au	
Bicycle Victoria	www.bv.com.au	03 8636 8888
Bicycle Transport Alliance	www.multiline.com.au/~bta/	08 9420 7210
Cycling Promotion Fund	www.cyclingpromotion.com.au	03 9818 5400
Cycling Australia	www.nsw.cycling.org.au/	02 9644 3002
Pedal Power ACT	www.pedalpower.org.au	02 6248 7995

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References and further information available at:
www.cyclingpromotion.com.au or www.bfa.asn.au

