

Reimagining the High Street



A thriving high street is seen as a prerequisite for any successful modern town or city. Since the economic downturn the high street has faced a number of challenges including shop vacancy, a shift to online purchasing and increasing parking restrictions. A new information platform called kn-i will help to reimagine the high street by providing access to real-time information for shoppers, retailers and service providers using any mobile device or static screen.

It will be demonstrated using a set of innovative use cases which will include the installation of a High Street Pod, built from sustainable materials and in keeping with the local area. The Pod will host screens and enable sensors to provide information about the local area, local services and offers for shoppers, as well as providing a point of interaction for citizens both with the information technology and with each other.

“This exciting project has the potential to further strengthen Southampton city centre’s economic and social role in the region”

- *Stuart Love, Director, Place, Southampton City Council*

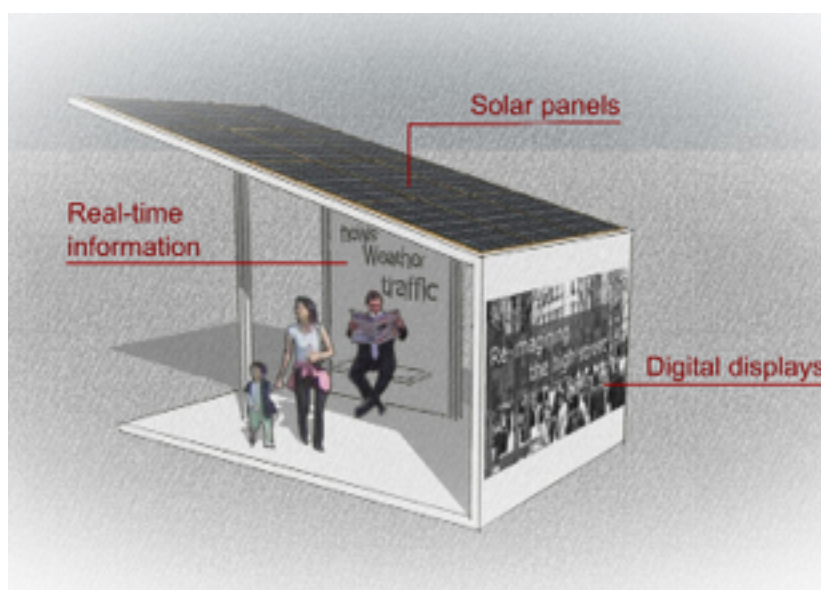


The kn-i platform enables a number of use cases including

- 1) The development of the High Street Pod and integration with local information
- 2) The use of sensors to provide information in real-time and content for the Pod
- 3) Integration of sensors into a moving vehicle - to be tested on a bicycle scheme
- 4) Augmentation of retailer systems to allow shoppers to purchase goods and request them to be delivered from an existing Sustainable Distribution Centre

It is our contention that a new, eye catching focal point on the high street which provides an ever changing selection of highly relevant information that citizens can interact with in real time will increase footfall and the average time spent on the high street therefore increasing retailer revenues. It will also offer several useful features such as a digital device charging point. The Pod will also serve to connect the shopper with place and, by deploying at multiple sites, enable a connection between different locations.

This project proposes to provide a new reason to visit the high street and to maximise time spent there by providing multichannel access to local information to the public using an existing platform called kn-i which has been developed by KnowNow Information Ltd. The technology will be applicable to any high street location and is to be demonstrated in the City of Southampton. The project has been designed by KnowNow Information to adhere to the City Masterplan and the City's Strategic Framework.



The pods will enable;

- Advertising - linked in real-time to offers from local business and availability of tickets for events. The pod will allow you to interact with this information stream using your device or the pod itself.
- Citizens interacting with news, local real-time information from local sensors, social media updates broadcast. Leading citizens to cluster around the pods because they are stimulating and worth a visit.
- Local Art dynamically chosen by shoppers, showcased on the digital screen or as part of the pod construction sympathetic to location.
- Citizens sharing the content of their device onto the pod screen via mediacasting or shared social media

The Pods have a multi-purpose function. They will be visually attractive, compelling and they will act as a meeting point, in effect creating a micro public space within a wider public realm. The pods will host digital screens which will have the ability to display content that is local, changing, dynamic and interactive. The pods have a key outcome in their own right, in that they are sustainable in terms of energy consumption and ongoing maintenance over their planned lifespan.

The second outcome is through capturing the sense of movement within the area surrounding the high street and sharing this data with the community. This will be done via wifi sensors that will then provide heat-maps of visitors location, origin, destination and therefore provide the citizen, retailer and high street operators a rich real-time view of flow through this space. The sensors will be leased from world leading partner, Profitail and the information generated is open data, which can be displayed on the pods screens, your own device or via your home/business browser. The benefits will include a greater understanding of footfall and public safety in the high street.

The third outcome is to improve connectivity between people and places within a high street. The hyperlocal information in the pods will incentivise visitors to travel to the other pods. KnowNow will prototype a city centre shared bike scheme, drawing on the London Mayor's scheme with sensors that will then broadcast information to the Pod screens. The bike will demonstrate connectivity within a high street area and be useful as a data generation point. The benefits will include the ability to monitor the transactions and flow in a high street and a positive impact on the users health.

A fourth outcome is the augmentation of an existing centralised Sustainable Distribution Centre (SDC) with a personalised 'reverse logistics' solution whereby purchases can be delivered to home from the SDC. This will free up shopper time & encourage modal shift from cars by removing the need to haul the goods directly home. The benefits that this will lead to are anticipated to be:

- More dwell time in the city centre, providing an opportunity to increase spend per head.
- Remove unnecessary car journeys driven by the need to transport purchases home encouraging modal shift to public transport or walking/cycling.
- Frees up space for the retailer to showcase stock versus holding stock, improving revenue per square meter.
- Builds a business case for the development of an SDC or add to the use of existing investments.

KnowNow will enable the connection between the retailer, the shopper and the logistics required to get your purchases home via the kn-i platform.

This project will create a reason to visit the interconnected high street with relevant local information powered by the kn-i platform with content delivered from retailers or local service providers existing systems as well as from innovative sensed solutions and featuring new services that will make your shopping life easier.