May Bike Everywhere Month is the most effective bike commuting platform of the year, encouraging thousands to bike more often for an entire month. But what happens when Bike Everywhere Month is over? Many will continue to bike to work throughout the summer. Some will not, but there are activities companies can do to keep the momentum of BEM going through a bike program.

To maximize the momentum of BEM, corporate bike programs require work in five areas:

- Infrastructure
- Operational support
- Motivational programs
- Education
- Commitment

**Infrastructure**

If you build it, they will come. With the right infrastructure—bikes, parking, showers and safe roads—more employees will use bikes and get around more efficiently. Company bike fleets are an efficient way to navigate large corporate campuses; to travel to meetings in urban centers; to deliver packages in densely populated areas; and to bike commute.

These company bikes are equipped with GPS tracking, which helps managers rebalance LinkedIn’s 200-bike fleet. Racks are a great start, but smart employers and developers are building indoor “end of trip facilities” with amenities like lockers and towel service.
Companies like Tableau, Google, Facebook and Children's Hospital, use bikes as an alternative to cars and company shuttles. FedEx and UPS use bikes for deliveries in dense cities like Paris, and in U.S. cities during the holidays and General Mills and Sunpower have loaner fleets for employees who want to try bike commuting.

Bike Parking, Showers, Lockers

Having a convenient and secure place to store bikes during the workday, as well as a place to shower and clean up are important amenities. They can be the make-or-break for many employees weighing the decision to bike commute. Facebook and Sunpower, for example, encourage bike commuting with showers, lockers, towel service and indoor bike racks. Levi Strauss & Co. built a large secure bike room with convenient parking for 200 employee bikes and a DIY repair station.

Safe Roads and Routes

In the U.S. our roads were originally built for bikes but have since been focused on motorized traffic. Companies committed to a bike program need to look at their own parking lots, streets and surrounding neighborhoods. Is it convenient and safe to get to and from your office? Are you working with your local transportation authority and bike coalition to improve surrounding streets? The safer and more efficient the roads, the more people will ride. And interestingly, the more people ride, the statistically safer it is for everyone.

Operational support

It's one thing to have great infrastructure, but if your program's not supported, it won't hit its targets.

Liability and Risk Management

For company bike fleets, it's important to make sure you've done everything you can to reduce liability. This includes plans for insurance, helmet use, education and maintenance. With careful upfront planning your program will operate smoothly, without undue risk.

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Bike Repair and Maintenance

If you have a bike fleet, then you must have a plan for regular maintenance and repairs. Depending on your physical set-up, you may also need re-balancing services, as bikes will migrate and not always be available where and when employees want them. Some companies, like Google and Genentech, contract for on-site maintenance while others have staff to handle it.

Some companies offer on-site bike repair for commuters, through either a visiting mechanic or full-time mechanics on site like you’ll find at Facebook’s Bike and Transportation Hub. Employees also appreciate DIY bike repair stations, like those at Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, McKinstry and Tableau.

Motivational programs

Like any good sustainability initiative, being a bike friendly business requires methods for motivating employee engagement.

Some incentive programs are evergreen, providing rewards throughout the year. Others are seasonal and tied to events like Bike-to-Work Day. Incentive Programs Clif Bar & Company has made bicycles a key part of their Sustainability Benefits Program and has made rewards a key part of participation.

Employees who bike commute at least twice a month are eligible to receive $500 cash for the purchase of a commuter bike or a retrofit of an existing bike. Employees who eliminate cars from their commute can earn up to $960 a year in rewards. Employees accumulate points that can be redeemed for a variety of rewards including commuter checks, cash, Clif gear, and even climate offsets.

Mozilla’s colorful Public bikes help employees zip around San Francisco during the workday. The fenders, panniers, forks and even the bell were custom-branded with Mozilla colors and graphics.
Events and Campaigns

Kimberly-Clarke’s bike program and sponsorship of their “Get Up and Ride” global bike-to-work campaign began with a single employee in Wisconsin. The campaign spread quickly and involves Kimberly-Clarke sites worldwide. And for those who love to ride, there’s nothing more motivating than healthy competition. At Specialized, employees track their bike commuting stats against other members through their Commuter Club.

Education

We’ve polled thousands of employees to understand what motivates or deters people from bike commuting. Safety is the #1 reason for not cycling. “I don’t feel comfortable riding with traffic.” The most bike-friendly businesses offer safe cycling education to their employees.

Workshops

Workshops by Cascade Bicycle Club and Commute Seattle, can be incorporated as a part of existing lunch-and-learn programs.

Internal Resources

Companies with comprehensive programs have a designated area on their internal websites for bike program information. This includes tips for safe cycling, links to outside resources, maps, routes, and workshop videos. Some companies have staff that provides direct assistance. Nike, for example, has a department that helps employees plot out the safest route to and from work as well as guide them to resources to make their ride easier and Nintendo encourages experienced riders to respond directly to employees who have questions about safety, routes, equipment and facilities.

Commitment

We’ve seen programs that started strong but didn’t have the institutional support to maintain the momentum from Bike Everywhere Month. This type of support requires the bike program to be tied to corporate objectives. For instance, Facebook’s goal of 50% alternative transportation drives their long-term commitment to cycling, which in turn helps them achieve their desired program results.

Being bike friendly has moved from a nice idea to an important and valuable sustainable business strategy. With this level of commitment from the company, maintaining momentum and high bike to work rates throughout the year can be achieved.

Need help planning bike facilities at your company?

Bikes Make Life Better is dedicated to helping large organizations use bikes for healthy sustainable transportation. They’ve helped design bike parking and facilities for Facebook, Salesforce, Airbnb, Stripe, Pembroke Real Estate, LinkedIn and many others.

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