

# Nike's E-Bike Loaner Program: How A Small Pilot Changed The Way Employees Move



Q&A with Meegan Watts

**Q: How did you convince leadership to invest in the program?**

A: First, we kept it cheap! Then the program aligned with the company's core values; we had data to support our objective; and we had partners to make it happen. Finally, we answered as many potential questions as we thought leadership would have in our multiple presentations.

**Q: Why do you consider the program a success?**

A: It is a low-cost option for the business and employees. 100% of employees would recommend the program to others. We see commute behavior change!

From the 2022 survey: 9% of participants surveyed said they bike-commuted regularly before the program. In the post trail survey, 48% said they bike-commuted regularly.

From the 2021 survey: Percentage of people who say they ride a bike 2-3 times per week (for any reason) was maintained, even in the winter, at 27%. This is up 20 percentage points from the sign-up survey. Also, 80% of respondents said the program encouraged them to buy a bike, even if they haven't yet, and 14% bought bikes directly due to this program.

**Q: What were the program's costs? Both for the employee and the organization? How is the program funded?**

A: Bikes, depending on model, are approx. \$1,000-\$4,000 each.

Insurance, depending on program structure and what waivers individuals sign is approx. \$2,000 per year.

Labor for administration is approx. 3-4 hours per participant per month.

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Mechanics - typical repairs include flat tires and broken chains. \$1,000+ per year depending on resources and partnership structure.

Ramp up costs - this is to give yourself a cushion during the first year because you are developing all the surveys, adjusting logistics, streamlining communications, etc.

We charged employees \$25 for the month-long trial.

### **Q: How did you identify a partner who could provide insurance for the program?**

A: Our partner, WashCo Bikes, has an insurance policy. WashCo bikes insurance is secondary to the home owners insurance that participants need to carry.

### **Q: Why did you choose ebikes over acoustic, and did you measure the benefits people found from the electric element? Any unexpected responses?**

A: The landscape/terrain in Oregon lends itself to e-bikes. We also offered "acoustic" bikes to participants. We had very little interest in the pedal bikes.

We did have a couple participants that preferred the pedal bikes. Almost everyone smiles and shouts, "this is so cool!" when they first hop on an e-bike.

### **Q: Did participants express a desire for better city infrastructure? In other words, did participants recognize that better infrastructure could make their ebike commute EVEN more enjoyable?**

A: Yes!!! It was helpful for the WTA to know the info. They were able to relay the bike infrastructure feedback to local county offices.

### **Q: Did you have to talk with participants about the security of bike parking at their homes? What about people who can't carry a bike up the stairs to their house? Was there an option for those folks?**

A: Yes! Security is a critical conversation. We supply excellent bike locks and talk about locking them up outside of home and even locking them in your garage.

Some e-bikes have removable batteries. We didn't give them a key to the battery as it was just another component to get lost. It is something purchasers should consider! I wouldn't want to haul my e-bike up three flights of stairs.

### **Q: Any breakdown on income levels of participants?**

A: We kept the cost to participate very low at \$25. The WTA does ask participants what their budget is should they be interested in purchasing an e-bike. There are lots of models out there to meet various budgets.

90% of participants said they want to spend less than \$2,000 on an e-bike.

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**Q: What are the most important survey questions?**

A: For us, it was important to capture comparative data. We asked before, during, and six months after 'how often do you ride a bike?' and 'how often do you bike commute?' Also, we include 'Would you recommend the program to others?'

**Q: Do you think a shared micromobility service (bike, e-bikes and e-scooters share) would be a good option to encourage participants who finish the program to continue riding?**

A: Yes! There is no bikeshare in Beaverton but the City of Portland does have BIKETOWN PDX. We encourage participation!

**Q: What has helped to get more riders commuting to work via e bike?**

A: The most ideal is having a buddy to ride with as employees explore new routes.

**Q: Does Nike have designated storage for the eBikes to keep them safe and allow for charging? What does that infrastructure look like? Has that helped getting more riders commuting to work via e bike?**

A: Confidential. I can say, most ebikes have a range of 40+ miles so it's easy for cyclists to charge at home.

**Q: Do you or WTA provide participants with route planning services as part of this program?**

A: Yes, we both help with route planning. Other employees also help each other.