

# Roadsoft® Roundup

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## Building Community at RUCUS 2016

The Center for Technology & Training (CTT) hosted its first annual Roadsoft User Conference of the United States (RUCUS). RUCUS was held November 1 in Lansing, Michigan, and had 96 individuals in attendance representing 64 Michigan road agencies as well as Indiana and Pennsylvania road agencies. The turnout exceeded our expectations for the first annual RUCUS!

Every aspect of RUCUS was planned to support learning and knowledge sharing for both our customers and CTT staff. During conference planning, CTT staff picked out hot topics like safety, pavement management strategies, and data integrity. Other RUCUS highlights included presentations on new Roadsoft features like the Inventory Based Rating (IBR) System for unpaved roads and Roadsoft for mobile.



Welcoming new and long standing Roadsoft customers.

Your Community. We asked Johnson about her motivation for presenting at RUCUS, and she responded that it was “an honor to share information on asset management and Roadsoft with our peers and potentially provide them a valuable resource to use every day...the more we share, the more we appreciate and understand our successes and lessons learned within our industry”. Worden similarly felt honored to present at RUCUS, hoping their presentation “provoked thought into what is possible with Roadsoft and how it can facilitate good sound asset management practices”. We all feel the crunch to do more in less time; by identifying and sharing our best practices, we can not only ease the pressures for those

just starting asset management with Roadsoft, but for seasoned Roadsoft veterans who want to do more as well.

“RUCUS provoked thought into what is possible with Roadsoft and how it can facilitate good sound asset management practices.”

-Mark Worden

Sharing knowledge is at the heart of our mission at the CTT. To align with this mission as well as our topic choices for RUCUS, we were fortunate to enlist a fantastic line-up of presenters, all eager to share their ideas and best practices. Presenters Joanna Johnson and Mark Worden from the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County set the bar high with their succinct and polished presentation on How to Use Roadsoft in Making Data Driven Decisions in

We, at the CTT, aren't always aware about how our products positively impact agency processes. It's exhilarating for us to hear how our products are making big differences to our customers. Although Carl Jager from the Ottawa County Road Commission had never presented to an audience before, his presentation Sign Management Then & Now: Saving Time with Roadsoft Mobile engaged the audience with the increased flexibility and time savings he has experienced in his use of Roadsoft mobile. Jager agreed to “get out of his comfort zone” and speak to about 100 of his peers at RUCUS because of his desire to “share about a tool that has worked extremely well for us [at Ottawa County Road Commission] and has taken us a giant step forward. ... [I]t could work just as well for others who are looking for an alternative way to manage their signs at their municipalities.” We are happy to hear agency success stories, and RUCUS is the perfect platform for sharing these types of success stories with the broader Roadsoft audience.

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The core drive for developing RUCUS was the need to connect with CTT customers in a different way. Although we enjoy connecting through our Roadsoft webinars and online Roadsoft User Group meetings, we felt that meeting face to face could make a bigger impact. With RUCUS, we were able to provide opportunities for attendees to meet with CTT staff and to make connections with each other. We achieved our goals for RUCUS 2016 in many ways: the electric atmosphere of participants exchanging their experiences, the wildly successful Roadsoft Lab where participants could meet with the Roadsoft support staff one on one to get specific questions answered, and the sneak peeks at some of the unreleased features currently in Roadsoft development and ideas.



Sean Thorpe, CTT Software Engineer met with Hossam Eldeen Abdel All, Traffic Safety Engineer for Macomb County Department of Roads in the Roadsoft Lab to answer agency specific questions.

Attendees like John Travis from the City of Traverse City validated our perceived successes for RUCUS. Travis enjoyed the opportunity that RUCUS provided to talk with CTT staff and see unreleased Roadsoft features for which he participated in a development focus groups. He explained that it was great to “see how some of the ideas [from the focus group discussions] were being implemented”. Feature requests and focus groups are an important part of the CTT’s development process for our software. Being able to show our customers like Travis a product that they had an active role in developing was a rewarding

experience for us at the CTT. Travis went on to say that he “also enjoyed speaking with Johnson regarding the problems we both face ...”.

RUCUS helped me “quickly realize the potential for Roadsoft to help [my agency] manage and plan our street repairs and improvements”

-Jake Hammel

Other RUCUS participants including Edward Bradford from the City of Manistee, Jake Hammel from the City of Hillsdale, and Lance Malburg from the Dickinson County Road Commission. Bradford, Hammel, and Malburg attended RUCUS to learn more about Roadsoft, to get some specific Roadsoft questions answered, and to network with their peers. Bradford found the Michigan Hour session beneficial and hoped that having TAMC and MDOT representatives would “happen every year”. Hammel is new to Roadsoft, so RUCUS helped him to “quickly realize the potential for Roadsoft to help [his agency] manage and plan our street repairs and improvements”. And, although Malburg has been using Roadsoft since the early 2000s, he jokingly mentioned that his attendance was due to the “prompting” by CTT staff member Carole Reynolds, but really his attendance was because his agency still struggles with getting what they want out of Roadsoft. Malburg found that attending RUCUS was a “time that we could get some special help, and to learn new tips and tricks”. We aimed to provide a wide variety of content so there was something for everyone at RUCUS 2016.

If you missed the first annual RUCUS, see the RUCUS conference page to view the agenda from RUCUS 2016 and to obtain the session presentation slides. Other presenters who shared valuable knowledge and experience with RUCUS participants included Linnea Rader from the Van Buren County Road Commission; Ed Hug from SEMCOG; Carla Schubert from the Elkhart County Highway Department; Heidi Spangler from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT); Eric Dziurka from the Bay County Road Commission; Richard Sprague from the Kent County Road Commission; Marcus McNamara from OHM Advisors; and CTT staff members Dale

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Lighthizer, John Kiefer, Mary Crane, Sean Thorpe, and Nick Koszykowski.

Additionally, the Michigan Hour presenters included Roger Belknap, the Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) coordinator; Dave Jennett from the Center for Shared Solutions; Mark Holmes from the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget; and Melissa Carswell from MDOT. The Michigan Hour covered overviews and updates in the presenters' various areas of expertise as it impacts asset management and Roadsoft.

The CTT extends its thanks and gratitude to all the presenters and participants who made the first annual RUCUS a great success, and be sure to watch for future announcements on RUCUS 2017 – planning has begun!

**RUCUS**  
Roadsoft User Conference of the United States  
**2017**

***RUCUS 2016  
was just the  
beginning.***



**Have a topic idea for 2017?  
Have a topic you want to present?  
Email your ideas to: [mcrane@mtu.edu](mailto:mcrane@mtu.edu)**