

# Porukkaapplication engages Lahti city residents

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**Organisation:** City of Lahti

**Country:** Finland

**Level of government:** Local government

**Sector:** General public services

**Type:** Communication, Data, Digital, Methods, Organisational Design, Partnerships, Public Service

**Launched in:** 2016

**Link to the innovation's website**

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# Description

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75 % of Finns have a smartphone, so City of Lahti decided to use a Porukkamobile application to reach out to its residents. Lahti is the first city in Finland to use a mobile application to capitalize on the possibilities of resident engagement in developing the city services. With the Porukkaapp Lahti wants to inspire its residents to think about what type of city they want to live in, spend their free time, study and work. E.g. during the recent strategy work we got a lot of ideas on how the city should be developed. Application and active interaction definitely brought additional value to our city strategy.

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## Why the innovation was developed

- Lahti city gathers development-related resident ideas and feedback through public hearings, idea development sessions and online surveys. Though rewarding and important, it is also time and money consuming, reaching usually only a handful of people. After launching our own "Porukka" app, Lahti has the ability to create new content in minutes and get feedback in hours. Porukka was launched 26th of January 2016. In July there were already 2014 active users and 144 006 responses. The Porukkaapplication is a success among the users. One of the best results is that gamification and ease-of-use has attracted young people to get involved.
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## Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Enhance public trust, Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality, Improve user satisfaction, Increase citizen engagement

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## Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, Families, General population, Government staff, Students, Young people

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# Results

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## Efficiency

- We want to create an ongoing interaction relationship with our residents. Porukka is an easy and effective communication channel for continuous interaction – regardless of time and place. It gives real-time data and results to support decision-making. Content management is easy and the data is quickly available in graphs.
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## User satisfaction

- The Porukkaapplication has increased resident engagement in developing the city services. It is a success among the users. Gamification and ease-of-use has definitely attracted people to get involved. Porukkaapplication works as a conversation starter among users, also in social media channels.

# Development

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## Design

The app is developed by Lahti based Advertising Agency MBE and Future Dialog. City of Lahti was the first major pilot for the app.

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## Testing

- We held a test session at the local library, where we gathered direct feedback on the usability and general feel of the app.
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## Implementation

### Tools used:

- Social media had a significant role in implementing the Porukkaapp and making it known to the users.

### Resources used:

- Future Dialog provided technical support and content management training. City of Lahti assigned one web communication officer to manage the app and its content as part of her job. City pays a monthly fee for the actual use. Development and its expenses are managed by Future Dialog.

Implementation time: 1 month(s)

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## Diffusion

- We have gathered a team to spread the use of Porukka app across the city organization. We have scheduled a co-design workshop with Future Dialog to develop the application further and to discover the best practices that can then be spread and replicated in other cities and communities.
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## Challenges and solutions

- Although 75% have a smart phone, it is important to keep in mind that not everyone has one and other means of participation are still very much needed. Technology is only the starting point. The manager has a very important role in making educated decisions what kind of questions work in the mobile setting and give meaningful results that can actually be implemented. You must have a good and committed team of developers and content creators. When engaging the residents, to just ask is not enough. It is very important to actively communicate the results and effects to the users and be thankful of their contribution.
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## Partnerships

### Future Dialog and Advertising Agency MBE

Private sector

Future Dialog provided the technology and Lahti's communication department developed the best practices for the user interaction, content and marketing.

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# Lessons Learned

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## Conditions for success

- Technology alone is not enough. The manager has a very important role in creating content that leads to meaningful results that can actually be implemented. When engaging the residents, it is very important to actively communicate the results and effects to the users.
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## Other information

There is a huge potential in developing Porukka application further. The technology is pleasantly simple, yet effective. Next steps include location based polls and questionnaires. We also have plans to make the results available as open data.

