

Nokia Tests A Traffic-Tracking Service

By Philip Dreyfuss
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Nokia, the Finnish cell-phone company, is collaborating with the University of [California, Berkeley](#), in order to test if traffic can be predicted and monitored through [cell phones](#). The test lasted all day Friday and 100 Berkeley students were involved, Cnet News reports.

Each student's car was endowed with a [Nokia N95](#) phone with GPS, as well as traffic-monitoring [software](#), also created by Nokia. While the students were driving, the company's research facility received information concerning the cars' speed and positions. The [data](#) was also displayed on the Internet, informing viewers and helping them reach their

[destinations](#) very quickly.

These results are great news for ordinary people, who drive to work every day, as well as for state transportation agencies, that invest a lot of money for equipment that provides [traffic information](#). Moreover, people who want to travel could easier plan their trips.

Of course, the first problem raised is that of privacy. Alex Bayen, a professor of civil and environmental engineering and lead researcher on the project for Berkeley, says people need not worry. Apparently, the information sent to Nokia does not contain private data, and the encryption methods are similar to the ones used by banks to keep the information private. Also, people can decide if they want to be monitored or not, as they can turn off the service if they do not wish their data to be sent to Nokia.

On the whole, the experiment appeared to be successful, and Nokia stated for Cnet News that they hope to develop the test even more, using 1000 people instead of 100. Also, the people involved will be asked to use the service not only for one day, but in their every day routines.

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