

A hyperlink network analysis was conducted on 121 organizations promoting sustainable transportation policy in three primarily rural, adjacent states: Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Previous studies have linked web presence with organizational success. Organizations in this study include regional planning commissions, metropolitan planning organizations, governmental departments, and non-profit advocacy groups. A web crawler was used to gather data on which organizations hyperlink to each other. This data was then used to construct social network maps illustrating how each organization fits into the larger architecture of their state network. Researchers were interested in determining what organizational characteristics relate to having a central location within these networks. After calculating different measures of centrality, correlations were run between centrality and a range of organizational attributes that were collected from an online survey of participants. These attributes included how influential an organization is according to its peers, how frequently it communicates with others, how useful its information is to others, what year it began focusing on sustainable transportation, founding date, budget size, number of paid and unpaid staff, percentage of resources dedicated to sustainable transportation, and number of partnerships related to sustainable transportation. Additionally, the centrality scores were correlated with data on media coverage in the Associated Press between 2008-2010. Results show significant correlations with media coverage, frequent communication, and the perceived influentialness of the organizations. This suggests, among other things, that transportation organizations with a central online presence surrounding a given topic tend to be more influential toward influencing that topic in the policy arena.