

Marketing Sub-Committee, Long Range Metro Transit Ad Hoc Committee  
November 21, 2007

The Marketing Sub-Committee has discussed the following items and provided recommendations/updates below.

**1. Business Advisory Committee:** To increase buy-in and participation from the business community, the Marketing Subcommittee recommends the creation of a Business Advisory Committee comprised of key business leaders who will assist Metro in telling its story to the business community. Joint presentations with Metro and Business Advisory members to community groups such as Downtown Madison, Inc., the Chamber of Commerce, and Southeast Wisconsin Realtors Association, may be an opportunity to communicate the benefits Metro offers to the business community. The Committee may also advise Metro on its message and approach to engage more businesses in unlimited ride contracts and Metro's Commuter Choice program.

**Update:** Both Richard and Amanda have agreed to serve on the Business Advisory Committee. Ad Hoc Committee members are invited to serve on the committee or refer colleagues who may be interested. The Committee will begin in early 2008.

**2. Recommendation Matrix:** The Marketing Subcommittee has created a matrix to offer marketing strategies for communicating the Ad Hoc Committee's final recommendations. The marketing strategies will be on two levels – core, daily marketing activities and higher level, targeted strategies. The matrix will serve as a guide for Metro staff and the Committee in the following ways:

- a.) Inform the public of the committee's recommendations.
- b.) Ensure that the work of the Committee will move forward after the group has dissolved.

**Update:** The Marketing Sub-Committee is waiting for final recommendations from Funding/Cost Management and Systems Improvements/Increased Ridership in order to move forward.

**3. Market Research and Target Audiences:** As Metro plans to update and enhance its current market research, the Marketing Subcommittee will provide input on strategy for conducting market research to identify target audiences and gain a better perspective on public perception and customer satisfaction. Formulation of strategic key messages to address confirmed public perception through this research is one of the end goals for Metro.

**Update:** The Marketing Sub-Committee has discussed the importance of targeted surveys in order to identify target audiences, understand public perception and provide a base for strategic marketing planning.

The Marketing Sub-Committee recommends that Metro implement 3 targeted market research surveys. The 3 surveys will each target the following areas:

- Current customers through an onboard survey
- Core Madison service area

- New areas for potential growth

The Sub-Committee has asked staff to put together budget estimates to complete the three surveys and has suggested that Metro be willing to make a significant investment in this critical research. Possible areas to look for funding and/or assistance with the research are WISDOT, the UW-Madison, or other transportation-focused organizations.

**4. Analysis of Marketing Budget Spending:** Metro's marketing budget of \$163,000 is extremely small and comprises only 0.4% of Metro's overall budget. When compared to Metro peer systems, its marketing budget ranked last. Metro peer system budgets averaged \$492,600 and 1.5% of overall budget. A strong marketing budget is essential to continue increasing ridership.

**Update:** The Sub-Committee has determined that a significant increase in the marketing budget is vital to Metro's long-term financial success. The Sub-Committee has asked staff to prepare a list of important marketing activities that are needed to increase ridership and increase positive PR throughout the community. Staff will accompany these items with a cost estimate. Potential activities may include:

- Marketing Research (see item 3)
- PR Campaign (i.e. ride the bus to work for free day)
- More staff
- Downtown Transit Center (24-hour kiosk with Metro information)

**5. Increased Partnerships:** The Marketing Sub-Committee recommends that Metro build upon partnership efforts with organizations and businesses, starting first with groups that have similar goals.

- Co-market Metro within city and county
  1. Special bus for Overture events
  2. Preferred entry at city/county events for those who arrive by transit
  3. List Metro info (web links, general info) on Overture and other city/county websites
  4. Promote Metro services at city/county-sponsored events (County Fair, Halloween Festival, Dane Dances, etc.)
  5. Co-market Metro with Monona Terrace "green building" certification
- Partner with large businesses
  1. Expand unlimited ride pass contracts
  2. Encourage employees to ride (i.e. make schedules available, inform employees of routes near the workplace)
- Partner with Sustain Dane and other environmental organizations

The remaining topics below are the final items to be discussed by the Marketing Subcommittee.

**1. Analysis of Metro's Customer Service Approach:** The Marketing Subcommittee will review Metro's customer service plan/activities and provide feedback on ways to enhance and encourage communication between Metro and its customers, and to ensure that there is follow up on suggestions or complaints.

Areas to be discussed include the following suggestions made by the public at the mid-term listening session.

- Angel Program (similar to a buddy system to match first time riders with "veteran riders)
- Improving the Ride Guide
- Expanded customer service hours

**2. Advertising/Corporate Sponsorships**

**3. Media/PR**