



SPRING/SUMMER 2016 RIDERSHIP CAMPAIGN MARKETING PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority's METRO bus system benefits employees, students, and recreational riders in the Greater Cincinnati market by providing an affordable and environmentally sustainable alternative to driving:

- METRO provides daily transportation to over 15,500 local employees of businesses within Cincinnati and Hamilton County
- The top five METRO routes provide access for thousands of employees and connect the fastest growing industries with the top five fastest growing zip codes in terms of employment
- The UC*METRO Program allows University of Cincinnati students to ride METRO for reduced fares
- The city climate has become more conducive to transit as public officials begin to recognize the need to attract Millennials to the area's top employers like Proctor & Gamble

According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the benefits of public transportation services like METRO include:

- Enhances personal opportunities
- Saves fuel and reduces congestion
- Provides economic opportunities
- Saves money
- Reduces gasoline consumption
- Reduces carbon footprint
- Improves productivity

Millennials, or young adults between the ages of 18-34, are the generation most likely to adopt public transportation given their high multimodal nature. In the next ten years, Millennials would like to see:

- 1) More reliable transit systems – 61%
- 2) Real-time updates – 55%
- 3) Wi-Fi or 3G/4G wherever they go – 55%
- 4) A more user-friendly and intuitive travel experience – 44%

Therefore, Millennials are a critical target audience for all METRO ridership campaigns given their numbers and their proclivity for wanting to have transit alternatives to driving.

METRO is currently “reinventing” itself to appeal to Millennials and other new rider audiences by promoting real-time update and trip planner mobile apps, introducing new, more fuel efficient vehicles into the fleet and, in August 2016, commencing mobile ticketing.

OBJECTIVES

Working collaboratively with METRO’s marketing department, AFFIRM will plan, produce and implement strategies to achieve the following strategic marketing objectives:

- **Increase ridership** by focusing on METRO’s technology updates, ease-of-use, convenience, and cost savings for riders.
- **Attract new audiences** by enhancing METRO’s image in the community with a unique event, #61616, which will appeal to Millennials and other audiences while taking advantage of social media and digital forms of communication.
- **Engage with customers** by using transit in the form of free Day Passes and free events at select METRO bus stops to encourage users to interact with and take advantage of the transit service. Research shows that once someone uses transit, they’re much more likely to become a repeat user.

STRATEGIES

We have developed a fully integrated plan that will reach METRO’s target audiences in a unique, impactful way and makes the most out of the available marketing budget. The plan will:

- Communicate the unique benefits of METRO in order to increase ridership
- Maximize campaign reach by employing both traditional and “new” media tactics to effectively reach target audiences
- Use National Dump the Pump Day, an event created by APTA to benefit its membership, as the background for the METRO event. On this day, Thursday, June 16, METRO will be offering free Day Passes as well as free entertainment & refreshments at FOUR high visibility bus stops

- Work with media and other program partners to earn the campaign thousands of dollars in added-value on top of paid media schedules
- Produce compelling marketing materials that will work together to promote interest in the campaign and ultimately attract riders to pledge to ride the bus
- Establish key metrics for evaluating and measuring program success

The Spring/Summer 2016 METRO Ridership campaign theme takes advantage of the once-in-a-lifetime date of this year's National Dump the Pump Day, 6/16/16, by making it the creative focal point of all campaign messaging:



#61616 EVENT PLAN SUMMARY

ALL #61616 marketing materials will drive people to a campaign microsite, www.METRO61616.com, where they can find out about all of the day's activities, link to METRO's main website for schedules and system information and, most importantly, pledge to ride the bus in order to get a FREE Day Pass from METRO as well as chance to win other great prizes. Everyone who pledges will get an automatic "ticket" via text message to their mobile phone or e-mail for those who don't have a mobile phone or refuse to give their number. On #61616, people will be able to redeem their texted or e-mailed "ticket" for a free METRO Day Pass by going to one of the following four bus stops at the indicated times:

1. Government Square between areas E and F on 5th Street - serves all but 3 routes:
7 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
2. Reading Road and McMillan Ave. –highly traveled corridor and across from a city park serves Rt. 43; Radio One will be the media group located at this stop as this stop fits their target audience: *9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.*
3. Uptown- Calhoun and Clifton –frequent service- serves Rts. 17 and 31: *1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.*
4. 13th & Race - adjacent to Washington Park in OTR - serves Rts. 21 and 64: *4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.*

Bus stop locations have been provided by METRO and were determined based on proximity to key businesses, university, and entertainment areas. The free METRO Day Pass can be used for unlimited rides within a 24-hour period on #61616 or any day after.

In addition to receiving a free Day Pass, additional incentives, including free live music and refreshments, will be provided to encourage people to come out to the four bus stops. Popular

Cincinnati-area musicians with strong social media followings will provide live music and help promote #61616 to their fans prior to the event and on the day of.

Campaign partners who have been brought on board with the help of our radio station partners, or via recruitment from the METRO/AFFIRM marketing team, will provide the free refreshments. Our goal is for pre-packaged items to be offered to minimize the time needed for distribution.

#61616 CAMPAIGN MARKETING AND OUTREACH MATERIALS

To achieve the campaign's marketing objectives and attract people to pledging and participating in #61616, AFFIRM recommends the creative development and implementation of the following marketing and outreach materials for direct marketing and paid media purposes.

OUT-OF-HOME "TEASER" TACTICS

The first campaign pieces that will appear are items promoting the **#61616** social media hash tag on METRO assets, including:

- 1. Removable Decals on METRO buses and transit shelters**
- 2. Transit Shelter Posters**
- 3. Transit Ads Using External Remnant Space on METRO buses**

This #61616 signage will begin appearing on METRO buses and bus shelters on Monday, May 16, one month ahead of the event. The "mysterious" hash tag should generate interest and cause people to enter it into social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). All #61616 social media accounts will be up and running by May 16, so anyone who goes there will learn about the event and be able to click thru to www.Metro61616.com to learn more and pledge.

PAID MEDIA PLAN

With a paid media budget of \$50,000, we must be judicious in our plan and use of those dollars, making sure to reach our target audience efficiently and effectively.

Media Objective: Create awareness of METRO and #61616 among the target audiences

Target Audiences:

- Primary: Millennials ages 18-34, who are multimodal and most likely to adopt public transportation
- Secondary: Adults ages 35-64 who drive for work and/or leisure

Strategy: Use targeted online and broadcast radio to create awareness, encourage participation foster a positive experience.

The main media goal is to make our target audiences aware of the #61616 event, encourage them to take the pledge to participate and get their “text ticket,” and begin to see and experience METRO in a new way.

Scarborough, a syndicated research service that provides consumer information within the Cincinnati market, was used to identify media tactics with which to reach the primary target 18-34 year old for the #61616 campaign.

- Millennials are among the heaviest users of the Internet and 16.2% of their time is spent on the internet
- 6.3% of their time is used in social media and texting
- 15% of their media time is spent listening to local radio with another 4.6% listening to satellite or Pandora radio

Recommendation:

The media campaign will begin four weeks prior to #61616 with geo-targeted online display advertising. The online display will precede broadcast radio, which will begin running two weeks prior to #61616 in order to build broader awareness and add frequency of exposure to the message.

ONLINE DISPLAY

An online/radio mix will increase website visits and purchase likelihood. This is especially true for Millennials who access music and video, and engage with contemporaries online. Furthermore, online is the most measurable media tactic and can be optimized almost instantly. Online can be targeted geographically by county, city, or zip code. All online display ads for this campaign will click thru to www.METRO61616.com.








Forecasting tools are used to estimate the minimum number of impressions needed to achieve effective reach in the market. Using the zip codes of the city of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (removing duplicates), the recommended impression reach is about 2.5 million impressions within a month. eMarketer research shows that 85% of the Millennial audience uses a SmartPhone, therefore the campaign recommendation is to use a Mobile-only campaign. This will include a mix of In-App and Mobile sites that are targeted by category codes allowing access to inventory focused around Millennial content. Specific targeting includes:

- Behavioral targeting, which includes demographics, interests – including affinity with public transportation, location based (urban), psychographic including young urban renters and urban essentials, entertainment, leisure, restaurant, events and attractions, etc.

Mobile Behavioral Targeting

Data Provider	Sample Segment
datalogix	Demographics > Generation > Millennials
Alliant	Household > Gen Y > Millennial
Data Alliance	Interests > Public Transportation > Affinity
webbula	Location > Location Type > City/Urban
nielsen	P\$YCLE > 57-Young Urban Renters
nielsen	P\$YCLE > 50 - Urban Essentials
Lotame	Entertainment/Leisure > Dining
Eyeota	Food & Restaurants > Restaurants & Dining
BlueKai	Interest > Entertainment
BlueKai	Interest > Arts & Entertainment
Exelate	Interest > Arts & Entertainment > Events & Attractions
BlueKai	Interest > Entertainment
BlueKai	Interest > Food & Drink > Restaurants
BlueKai	Interest > Shopping
BlueKai	Interest > Food & Drink > Restaurants > Fine Dining

- Persona targeting, which has segments focused around Millennials and public transportation will be used in this effort. Persona will hit an audience that has shown an interest/intent in public transportation by their app downloading behavior, providing a very strong audience for the campaign. There is also the ability to target by app ownership – targeting users that have downloaded specific apps related to the target audience. These might include: Netflix, Uber, Snapchat, etc.

Persona
Sample Targeting
Custom built Millennial and Public Transportation in-app audience. Sample personas and app ownership listed below.
Persona
College Kids
Mobile Banking Users / Payment Makers
Photo & Video Enthusiasts
App Ownership
 YouTube  Instagram  Netflix  Snapchat  Uber  Tumblr  Huntington Mobile

The online effort will run across mobile platforms, including Smartphones and tablets. It will include: 320 x 50, 300 x 60, 160 x 600, 300 x 250 and 728 x 90 standard IAB (Internet Advertising Bureau) units that will run May 16 through the morning of June 16. The program will deliver 2,458,825 impressions at a cost not to exceed \$12,000.

Because the buy will be placed in real time, individual sites will not be identified prior to the program's launch, but can be expected to include many local sites due to the targeted geography.

BROADCAST RADIO

The benefit of broadcast radio is that it provides broad market reach. It is the original experiential pioneer – radio events and remotes are successfully used in generating consumer awareness and trial.

According to the Nielsen Total Audience Report (Q1 2015), 93% of adults ages 18 to 34 and 95% of adults ages 35 to 49 listen to radio each week. These listeners identify and engage with their favorite stations by following them on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. Furthermore, Radio Advertising Bureau / Edison Research indicates that 41% of listeners have taken action as a result of hearing an ad on the radio while 28% visit a website to learn more about what they heard.

To maximize budget and effectively reach target audiences, AFFIRM and METRO will partner with one of the major radio groups in the market – Cumulus or Hubbard Interactive. Both radio groups have a strong stable of stations and promotional expertise to provide additional general market support. Radio-One's WIZF-FM (101.1) will be enlisted to do the same to reach the African American community.

The selected radio group will assist in event promotion, providing support both on-air and online via their websites. Also, e-blasts and postings on station Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages will take listeners to www.METRO61616.com to help generate pledges and "text ticket" requests. Additional added-value will be negotiated upon METRO approval.

The stations within the partner group will each co-sponsor one of the four bus stops being used for #61616 Day Pass and other giveaways, doing a 90 minute live appearance, complete with the station talent, prize giveaways and, if available, refreshments. Street teams may be on-hand to help in the event.

On-air schedules, consisting of :30 second spots, will promote the event beginning on June 1 and running through the afternoon of June 16.

WIZF-FM will partner with Metro to drive attendance from the African American community. This station will include an on-air schedule as well as digital components. The event will be promoted on their website, www.wiznation.com which average 43,600 visitors monthly. 80% of their visits are generated via their mobile site. 300 x 250, 320 x 50 and mobile interstitials or full screen ads will be used to promote Metro #61616 to their listener base. In addition there will be a blog roll story post on the home page and inclusion on the event page. Their social media efforts will include two Facebook, Instagram and Twitter posts each.

METRO

#61616 Media Recommendation

		April 27, 2016																																					
		May				June				July				August				September				October				November				December									
Media:		#	2	9	#	#	#	8	#	#	#	4	#	#	#	1	8	#	#	#	5	#	#	#	3	#	#	#	#	7	#	#	#	5	#	#	Cost		
Online Display																																							
Cross-platform																																							\$12,000
2.4 million impressions																																							
Radio (:60)																																							
Cumulus or Hubbard																																							\$38,000
Radio One																																							

CAMPAIGN SOCIAL MEDIA

Millennials spend nearly twice as much time online as they do on other media outlets. For this reason, #61616 will be very much social-media driven.

Starting on May 12, #61616 social media pages will start being populated with teaser posts about the campaign. The main reason to do this is so that on May 16, when the signage on METRO assets start appearing and the microsite goes live, there will be content on social media when people learn about and start entering the campaign hashtag. Teasers will be posted that hint at the types of entertainment that will take place and reveal more details as the event approaches. On May 16, social media will begin promoting and including links to www.METRO61616.com to push people to the site to pledge. Cincinnati-area social media “taste makers” will also be engaged and encouraged to spread the #61616 word on their own social media platforms. In addition, the campaign’s Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages will be used to promote a METRO Snapchat account that people will follow for live updates on the day of the event.

On #61616, the METRO Snapchat account will add updates to its Story, allowing people to see what’s happening and encouraging them to join. There will also be a custom #61616 Snapchat filter available on the day of the event for all Snapchat users who travel through the Cincinnati area to be able to use (pending Snapchat approval). Facebook, Twitter and Instagram posts will consist of live updates, interviews with attendees describing why they chose to ride the bus, and reminders to follow the METRO Snapchat account and Story.

After #61616, stories, photos, and videos from the event will be posted to METRO’s Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube pages, encouraging followers to also share their own. If possible, social media contests will be held related to upcoming events (e.g. 513, etc.). The accounts will also be used to suggest cool Cincinnati-area destinations that new riders can take the bus to.

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

An integral part of any marketing plan is measuring the success of the advertising tactics in communicating the program messages and achieving campaign goals. So, once a campaign implementation plan is finalized, we look at all the metrics or ways of measuring campaign success. For the #61616 campaign, key measurement and evaluation metrics may include:

- Achieving a set goal of new riders on #61616
- Number of free Day Passes distributed on #61616
- Number of pledges made to ride the bus on METRO61616.com
- Number of earned media news stories and articles about #61616
- METRO61616.com microsite and overall GO-METRO.com website statistics showing increases in visits, page views, and overall traffic as a result of the campaign

- Paid media metrics, including radio station affidavits and online reports showing sufficient reach and frequency of media and impressions served
- Social media metrics on Likes, Shares, Comments, Retweets, Mentions, Favorites, Referral Sites
- Attendance at #61616 events

#61616 CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

5/12 – Social media teaser campaign begins (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). Posts feature #61616 hashtag but do not yet link to microsite

5/16 – METRO61616.com campaign microsite live

5/16 – #61616 music acts and refreshments confirmed and promoted

5/16 - #61616 signage posted on METRO assets, including buses and transit shelters

5/16 – First social media posts including METRO61616.com link. From this point, posts will continue on a consistent basis (every other day or so) until #61616, including posts from participating partners (music groups, media, etc.). Followers will be encouraged to pledge and add METRO's Snapchat account

5/19 – Geo-Targeted Online Display advertising begins

6/1 – Broadcast Radio advertising begins

6/16 - #61616 event happening at four METRO bus stations. Press event as well?

6/17 – Post-event social media to continue through 6/30 (or until videos / photography is available)