APPENDIX A
Survey Questionnaire

Synthesis Questionnaire
Methods of Rider Communication

Date:

Name and Title of Respondent:

Transit Agency Name:

Address:

Phone Number: Fax Number:

Respondent's E-Mail Address:

Purpose of this survey: Transportation agencies strive to build new ridership and maintain existing riders by providing high-quality customer service. There are several components of high-quality service that include not only improved elements of transit services, such as reduced travel times and improved service reliability, but also direct customer service elements, such as real-time arrival/departure information, on-board information and amenities (e.g., wireless Internet), and automated fare payment. This survey focuses on how agencies communicate effectively with new and existing customers in routine and emergency situations. Once the survey results are reviewed, key agencies that have the most effective methods/techniques for communicating with existing and potential riders will be selected for telephone interviews to gather more in-depth information. All survey responses will be confidential. The final results of the survey will be synthesized into a report that will be published by the Transportation Research Board (TRB).

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Transit System Characteristics:

1. Which modes does your agency either directly operate or subcontract?

☐ Fixed-route bus   ☐ Light rail/streetcar

☐ Paratransit   ☐ Bus rapid transit

☐ Heavy rail/subway   ☐ Commuter rail

☐ Other (please specify):   ☐ Ferry

2. How many total riders does your system carry on an annual basis?

3. How many riders do you carry on each mode on an annual basis?

☐ Fixed-route bus: ☐ Light rail/streetcar:

☐ Paratransit: ☐ Bus rapid transit:

☐ Heavy rail/subway: ☐ Commuter rail:

☐ Other (please specify):   ☐ Ferry:

4. What percent change in total annual ridership has your agency experienced over the past five years (2000–2005)?   %

5. Does your agency have a goal to increase ridership in 2006?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   If Yes, what is that goal?   %

Communications Characteristics:

6. How many of each type of customer are riding your system? Please provide the percent of your total ridership for each category of customers. For example, if you carry elderly and disabled customers, you would check off the box, and note that 10% of your riders are elderly or disabled. Note: The percentages will **not** add up to 100%. Also note that if you do not have riders in a particular category or do not know how much of your ridership is in a specific category, do not check off the box for that type of passenger.

☐ Regular travelers/commuters (does not
   include elderly or disabled riders):   %   ☐ Male: %

☐ Elderly/disabled: %   ☐ Female: %

☐ K-12 students: %   ☐ Tourists: %

☐ College students: %   ☐ Other (please specify):   %

7. Which types of communication does your agency provide to riders or potential riders?

☐ Operational information (e.g., route   ☐ Routes and schedule information
   detour)
                                             ☐ Public meeting information
☐ Proposed service changes
                                             ☐ Safety (e.g., mind the gap)
☐ Security
                                             ☐ Transit in the community (e.g., transit
☐ General information (e.g., how to ride,   agency teamed with local business)
   fare information)
                                             ☐ Other (please specify):
☐ Other (please specify):

8. Which departments in your agency have primary responsibility for each type of communication?

☐ Operational information (e.g., route detour)

☐ Routes and schedule information

☐ Proposed service changes

☐ Public meeting information

☐ Security

☐ Safety (e.g., mind the gap)

☐ General information (e.g., how to ride, fare information)

☐ Transit in the community (e.g., transit agency teamed with local business)

☐ Other (please specify):

☐ Other (please specify):

9. Please note which of the following items you provide to customers and how often you provide it. (Check all that apply.)

Communication Content	Frequency			
	Real-time	Periodic	One-time	Other (please specify):
Operational Information:				
Next bus/train/ferry arrival/departure time	☐	☐	☐	
Detours/delays	☐	☐	☐	
Vehicle location	☐	☐	☐	
Trip and/or connection time	☐	☐	☐	
Parking availability	☐	☐	☐	
Other (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	
General Information:				
Maps, routes, schedules, and fares	☐	☐	☐	
Rider's guide	☐	☐	☐	
Information for disabled riders	☐	☐	☐	
Trip planning (including Point A to Point B planning, find closest stop, find service at a location)	☐	☐	☐	
Other (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	
Safety/Security:				
Reminders about notifying officials about suspicious packages or activity	☐	☐	☐	
Evacuation of transit facilities/vehicles	☐	☐	☐	
Escalator/elevator outages	☐	☐	☐	
Amber alerts	☐	☐	☐	
Other alerts (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	

10. How is this information provided to your customers?

Communication Content	Dissemination Media												
	Paper	Static sign at transit stop/station	Electronic sign at transit stop/station	Public address system	On-board electronic sign	Internet (website)	Telephone	Mobile telephone	Wireless application protocol (WAP)-enabled device	Kiosk	E-mail or page	Wireless device (e.g., PDA, iPod)	Other (please specify):
Operational Information:													
Next bus/train/ferry arrival/departure time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Detours/delays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vehicle location	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trip and/or connection time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fare payment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parking availability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
General Information:													
Maps, routes, schedules, and fares	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rider's guide	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information for disabled riders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trip planning (including Point A to Point B planning, find closest stop, find service at a location)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Safety/Security:													
Reminders about notifying officials about suspicious packages or activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evacuation of transit facilities/vehicles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escalator/elevator outages	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amber alerts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other alerts (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. How do you make communications accessible to all riders? (Please check all that apply.)

Communication Content	Accessible Format						
	Braille	Large print/large font size	Audio version of visual information	Visual version of audible information	Website is Section 508-compliant	Interactive voice response technology	Other (please specify):
Operational Information:							
Next bus/train/ferry arrival/departure time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Detours/delays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vehicle location	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trip and/or connection time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parking availability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
General Information:							
Maps, routes, schedules, and fares	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rider's guide	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information for disabled riders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trip planning (including Point A to Point B planning, find closest stop, find service at a location)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Safety/Security:							
Reminders about notifying officials about suspicious packages or activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evacuation of transit facilities/vehicles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escalator/elevator outages	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amber alerts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other alerts (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Communications Effectiveness:

12. Does your agency have a program and/or goals for communicating with riders? For example, New Jersey has an on-going campaign to promote transit as "The Way to Go." Another example is King County Metro's Route 120/125 promotion during the September 2004 service change. ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If Yes, what program(s) do you currently have in place?

13. Do any of these programs and/or goals include the use of technology, such as electronic signs at stops/stations; and information provided via the Internet, mobile phones, pagers, interactive voice response, wireless devices (e.g., personal digital assistants, web-enabled devices, and iPods), and/or kiosks? For example, BART provides a "QuickPlanner" for the Apple iPod that includes schedules, station information, and a system map. ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If Yes, what program(s) include technology?

14. What techniques does your agency use to determine the content, format, and dissemination media for each type of rider communication? (Please check that all apply.)

Communication Content→ Method of Determining Content ↓	Operational Information	General Information	Safety/ Security	Other (please specify):
Content determined in-house with no external input	☐	☐	☐	☐
Consult with external source	☐	☐	☐	☐
Consult with riders (e.g., focus groups, surveys)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use information from complaints	☐	☐	☐	☐
Base it on another agency's communication	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify):	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. Once the information is communicated, how do you determine and/or measure whether or not it:

    a. Reached the market for which it was intended?

    b. Was accessible to all individuals?

    c. Could be understood by the individuals receiving it?

    d. Was received in a timely way (e.g., real-time information received via mobile phone was received in a specified time)?

    e. Resulted in the changes that were expected due to the communication (e.g., increased ridership)?

16. Does your agency test the communication prior to releasing it to the public?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No

17. For communication that is provided to customers electronically, does your agency have specific contracts and/or agreements with wireless communications providers (e.g., Verizon Wireless), Internet providers, or information service providers? For example, Transport for London has arrangements with orange™, O$_2$, T-Mobile, and vodafone™ to provide a variety of wireless application protocol (WAP) (or mobile Internet) services such as travel alerts. ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If Yes, what companies does your agency have contracts/arrangements with?

Communications Costs:

18. What are the capital and annual operations and maintenance costs of providing electronic information to customers on an annual basis?

Electronic Communication Media	Total number of units	Total capital cost	Total annual operating and maintenance cost	Other (please specify):
Electronic sign at transit stop/station				
On-board electronic sign/audio system (annunciation system)				
Website				
Internet trip planning software				
Interactive voice response system				
Contract/agreement with wireless carrier				
Information service provider				
Wireless application software				
Kiosk				
E-mail software				
Other hardware (please specify):				
Other software (please specify):				

19. What is the cost of customers receiving electronic information from your agency? For example, train travelers in Melbourne, Australia, pay no more than $0.55 (Australian dollars) per short message service (SMS) to obtain train timetable information.

Best Practices in Methods of Rider Communication:

20. What methods/techniques of communicating with new and existing riders have been most effective in your agency?

21. If your agency does not currently have electronic communication to riders, has your agency considered it as a way to attract "choice" riders?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If Yes, which electronic technologies are you considering for communications with riders?
    ☐ Electronic sign at transit stop/station
    ☐ Public address system
    ☐ On-board electronic sign
    ☐ Internet (website)
    ☐ Interactive voice response
    ☐ Mobile telephone application
    ☐ Wireless application protocol (WAP)-enabled device
    ☐ Kiosk
    ☐ E-mail or page
    ☐ Wireless device (e.g., PDA, iPod)
    ☐ Other (please specify):

22. Did the deployment of an electronically available information system result in an increase in ridership? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If Yes, how much did ridership increase as a result of disseminating information via electronic means? _____ %

23. If you have conducted surveys and/or focus groups to determine the content or effectiveness of communication, can you provide the results for this Synthesis project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

24. Have you issued any press releases about communicating with riders using electronic techniques? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    If Yes, can we obtain copies of the press releases?

25. What is the one biggest problem associated with communicating with new and existing riders?

26. What was the one biggest problem associated with communicating with riders via electronic means?

27. What is the one biggest problem associated with operating and maintaining the hardware and software that is being used to generate and disseminate information electronically?

28. Please describe any additional "lessons learned" that would benefit transit agencies that are considering communicating with their new and existing riders using electronic means.

29. Are there other agencies that you know of that we should speak to regarding "best practices" in methods/techniques of rider communication? If so, please provide contact information.

    Please return the completed questionnaire by January 18, 2006 to:

    Ms. Carol L. Schweiger
    Assistant Vice President
    TranSystems Corporation
    One Cabot Road
    Medford, MA 02155 U.S.A.
    Telephone: 781-396-7775 X30211
    Fax: 781-396-7757
    E-mail address: clschweiger@transystems.com

    We encourage you to return your completed survey to Ms. Schweiger via e-mail at clschweiger@transystems.com. If you have any questions on the survey or the project, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Schweiger.

    Thank you very much for your participation in this important project.