



MCTS 2020 MARKETING YEAR IN REVIEW



2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 was a year filled with unexpected firsts related to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic and Black Lives Matter peaceful protests. MCTS rose to the challenge and elevated its marketing and communications to a new level.

Vaccines will be distributed in 2021, however, the repercussions on transit will be felt for years to come. The effects on normal business activities related to COVID-19 will likely impact MCTS customers and their relationship to bus riding. Therefore, we will need to adapt our marketing and communications with this in mind. The tone of 2021 will be shaped by topics that matter most to our passengers.


MISSION, VISION, VALUES DEVELOPMENT

In early 2020, MCTS finalized a new Mission and Vision statement, along with setting core organizational values. A set of strategic goals and focus areas were also developed to help guide the agency's efforts across departments.



MISSION

MCTS connects our community to jobs, education and life with essential transit services



VISION

To be the preferred transportation choice through service excellence and innovation



VALUES

Respect
Integrity
Excellence
Equity
Collaboration
Innovation

MCTS ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

- Enlist all MCTS departments to improve the rider experience.
- Create an inclusive atmosphere to foster a unified, engaged workforce.
- Increase ridership by meeting the needs of the community.
- Develop sustainable funding and enhance fiscal stability.



ADVERTISING

MCTS had two major campaigns planned for 2020. The Democratic National Convention (DNC) was supposed to be held in Milwaukee in July. Because of COVID-19, the convention was dramatically scaled down and tens of thousands of expected visitors did not end up attending in person. Therefore, we decided to cancel a planned integrated marketing effort to promote MCTS while the spotlight was on Milwaukee. In addition, a very unique campaign to attract non-riders was slated for the Fall, but was also canceled.

Instead, we developed two separate Spring and Fall campaigns focusing on staying healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both campaigns were translated into Spanish and were highly targeted along core ridership routes as well as neighborhoods hit hardest by the virus.

For the Fall campaign, we used real riders -- who were also healthcare workers -- to help us focus on the safe riding message. This campaign aligned with national consumer research developed by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). In addition to this paid campaign, we also developed a new landing page, RideMCTS.com/Health, which featured information reminding passengers to do their part.

While most of our paid advertisement efforts in 2020 were related to health and COVID-19, we also had a special campaign in Fall to remind people that the bus was an option if they were heading out to vote early or on Election Day. We worked with our advertising agency to design and implement a widespread social media campaign targeting current bus riders in Milwaukee County. This campaign even led to some traditional media coverage from news outlets who were informing their audience on different options when it comes to casting a ballot.



2020 ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN METRICS

Three Advertising Campaigns in 2020

- One digital-only campaign
- Two multi-channel campaigns

36.8 million impressions generated

- 15% of impressions were digital
- 80% of impressions were in targeted OOH in neighborhoods most affected by COVID-19 and those most likely to be MCTS riders
- 295,943 unique people reached on Facebook and Instagram
- More than 340,600 people reached across interactive display

Reached key audiences with targeted interactive and traditional media

- Current riders
- Hispanic audiences (translations were used in select areas)
- African American audiences
- Low income residents
- Potential riders or lookalikes of MCTS web/app users
- Each campaign included messaging and creative speaking directly to community with clear call to action

Campaigns focused on:

- Bus Rules / Social distancing / Essential travel
- Encouraging sense of community / safety while riding during COVID
- Using public transportation to vote

Voting campaign stats:

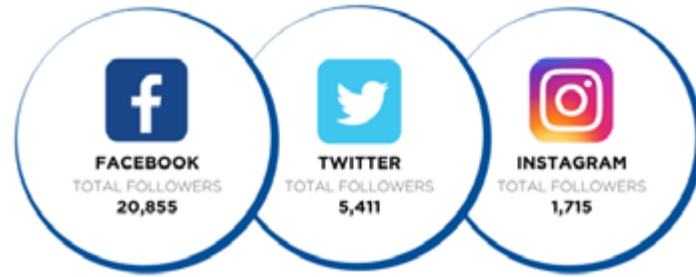
- Paid social campaign, in total:
- Reached 178,111 people
- Generated 1,137,105 impressions

DIGITAL

SOCIAL

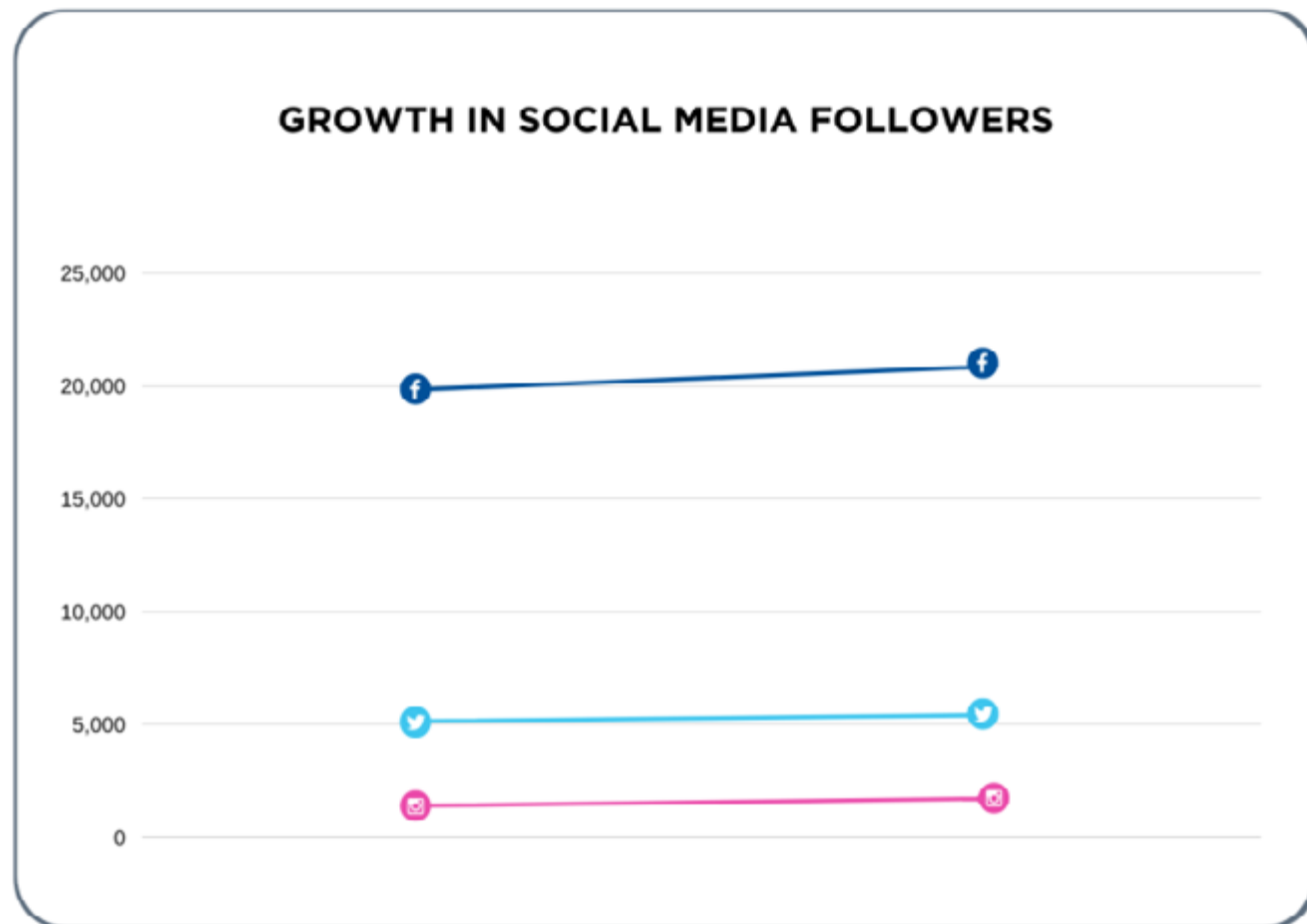
There's no denying the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our lives, our behaviors and our routines. Businesses are also feeling the impact as they realize that their digital transformation is being accelerated, even beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

In 2020, MCTS's social media posts shifted from content like MCTS Excellence drivers and entertaining videos to primarily COVID-19 content. As a result of moving away from light-hearted, yet educational content and turning to a more serious voice, we lost a lot of momentum



in growing our follower base across all of our social platforms. Our audience came to us for information about how they would stay safe while riding and when their bus would come rather than a feel-good story. MCTS's latest analytics reflect this change in approach. (More details can be found in the Appendix)

In their search for information, consumers are turning to brands for information and reassurance relating to the crisis.



INFLUENCER CAMPAIGN

In the third quarter we kicked off our 2020 Instagram influencer campaign with the help of our DBE Marketing Agency. The selected influencers have a variety of different "focuses", from lifestyle and mommy-bloggers, to artists and musicians. This was done to ensure the MCTS message reaches a wide audience throughout the Milwaukee and surrounding areas. The resulting content was a mix of important COVID-19-related safety information and reminders that MCTS is an essential part of our community.

- Jill Emmer**, @shineonyoucraydiamond
- Discover Milwaukee**, @discovermilwaukee
- Leepa Mittal**, @leepamittal
- Mauricio Ramirez**, @mauriciopaints
- Lex Allen**, @theofficiallex
- Natasha Nafri**, @natashanafri
- Maureen Fitzgerald**, @wisconsinmommy (with added value post series on @explorewithjosh)

TOTAL MCTS INFLUENCER CAMPAIGN METRICS:

Impressions	125,852
Reach	88,991
Post Engagements	13,626
Comments	780
Shares	90
Story Impressions	26,061
Engagement Rate per Impression	11.51%

MCTS PAID POST METRICS:

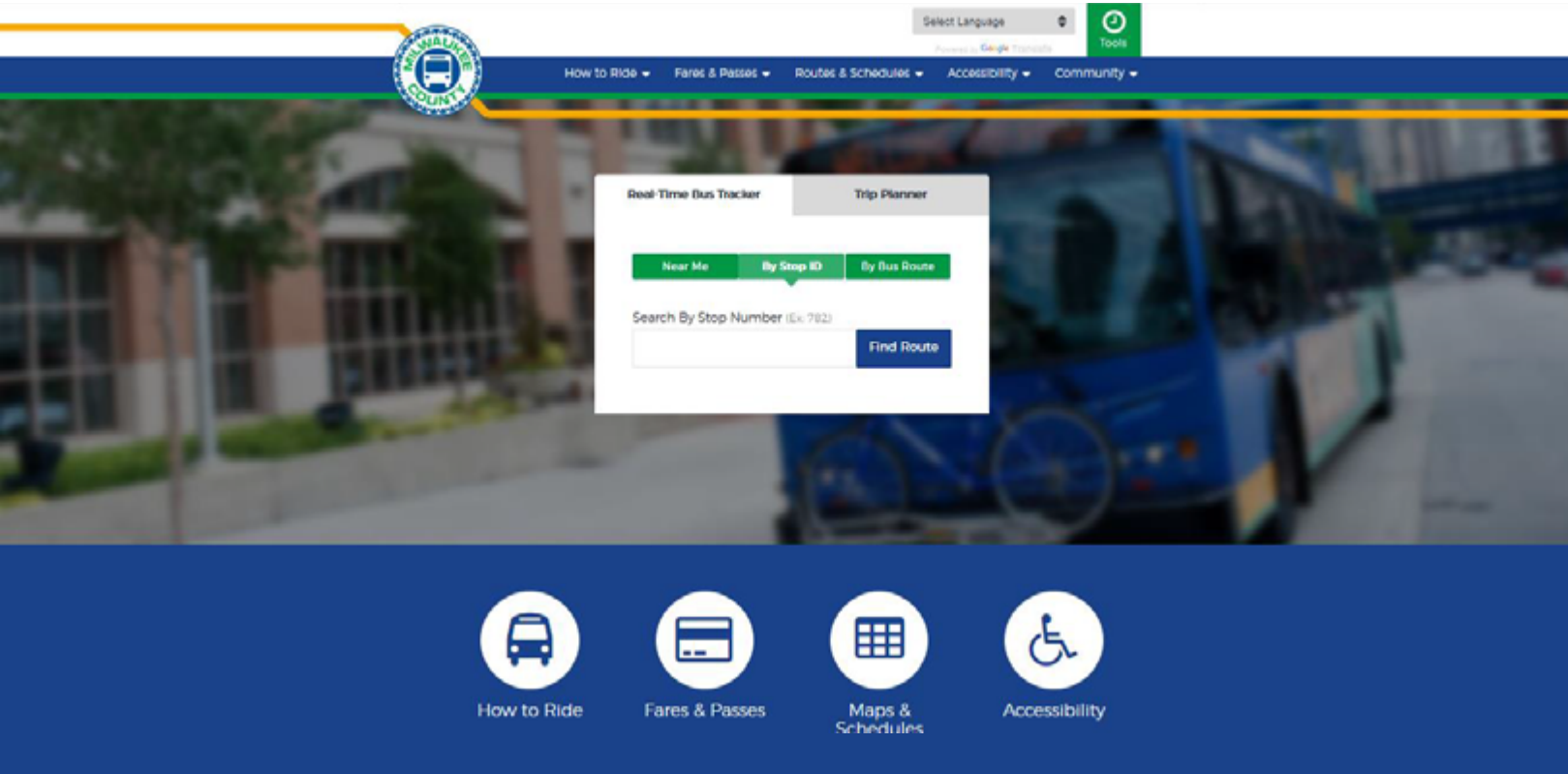
Impressions	214,674
Reach	34,194
Post Engagements	2,189
Engagement Rate per Impression	1.01%



RIDE MCTS APP

Increased app downloads by 22 percent over 2019. (See Appendix for more 2020 digital analytics).

DIGITAL



WEBSITE REFRESH

MCTS worked hard to update its brand guidelines in 2020. With this, we thought it would be a great opportunity to give our website a refresh. After several months of auditing and planning with our advertising agency, the refresh went live on October 1.

Our goal with this website refresh was to make everything easier to find. We delved into the analytics to see which pages & features had the most traffic, including pages folks seemed to search for the most, and made sure to highlight them. We rearranged our navigation based on the analytics, and also what was featured on the homepage and where.

With this, we researched the trends of other transit agencies. Many agencies have moved all their in-house information, including the search bar, to a more all-encompassing footer. This keeps the main navigation purely for customers, making it much easier for them to find only the content they absolutely need.

We wanted to make our website fully accessible for everyone, which helps us align with our goals for Title VI. This is also why you'll now see the Google Translate tool featured at the very top of the page, and the Accessibility information called out in the navigation and on the homepage.

MEDIA OUTREACH

The last few years saw a growth of the MCTS Excellence program, which includes a popular video series that highlights bus drivers for their acts of kindness, compassion, and heroism. These stories -- and the resulting positive news coverage they generate -- are normally a big part of our media outreach. But this year, the program took a backseat to stories about COVID-19.

MCTS worked with the media and other community partners to remind the public that we are an essential part of the community's infrastructure. Our bus drivers are the reason other essential employees can get to work -- at places like hospitals and grocery stores.

In addition to ad campaigns and social media content, MCTS arranged for bus drivers to be part of various news coverage and special projects related to the pandemic.

Examples include:

- As part of the Milwaukee Downtown BID's "Hero in You" project, MCTS Driver Willie Nash was photographed and interviewed for a blog post. Her image also served as the inspiration behind the bus driver portion of a mural along MacArthur Square.
- Willie Nash was also interviewed for the "Milwaukee Strong" project -- and made a cameo in the project's music video.
- MCTS Driver Karen Martinez was part of a PSA campaign for the non-profit organization, Mask Up MKE, which reminds people to wear masks.
- MCTS Driver Danita Wilson was photographed next to a mural that says "All In This Together," as part of a photo series honoring essential workers.
- MCTS Driver Yaghnam Yaghnam -- representing essential workers in Milwaukee -- recorded a segment for the annual Chicago/Midwest Emmy Awards, presenting one of the award categories during the virtual event.
- MCTS Driver Tyrone Randall recorded a segment for a PBS Milwaukee holiday special honoring essential workers.

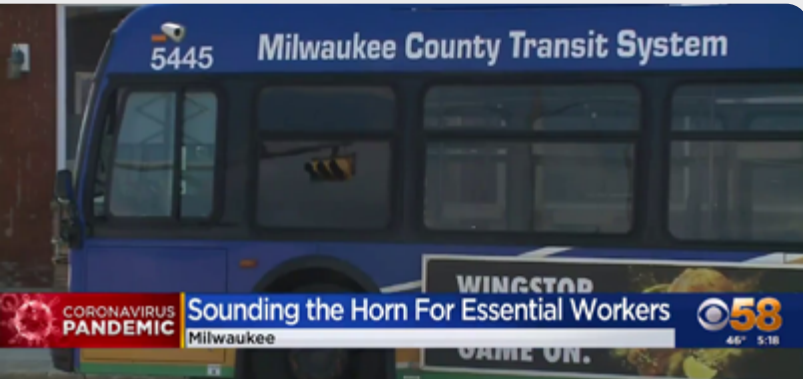


MEDIA OUTREACH CONTINUED

- Several bus drivers and mechanics were interviewed for local TV news stories about what it is like to be an essential worker during the pandemic.
- Media coverage also focused on MCTS safety protocols during the pandemic and mask distribution efforts.

Even though most attention was on COVID-19, MCTS was also a part of news coverage about topics like:

- New App Helps Bus Passengers Who Are Blind or Visually-Impaired
- New Bus Route to Amazon's Fulfillment Center in Oak Creek
- Now Hiring Mechanics
- Virtual Job Fair to Hire Bus Drivers & Mechanics
- Bus Driver Buys Bike for Little Boy Along Route
- Bus Driver Rescues Skunk with Head Stuck in Yogurt Cup
- Annual Transit Tribute to Rosa Parks
- Stuff the Bus Goes Virtual

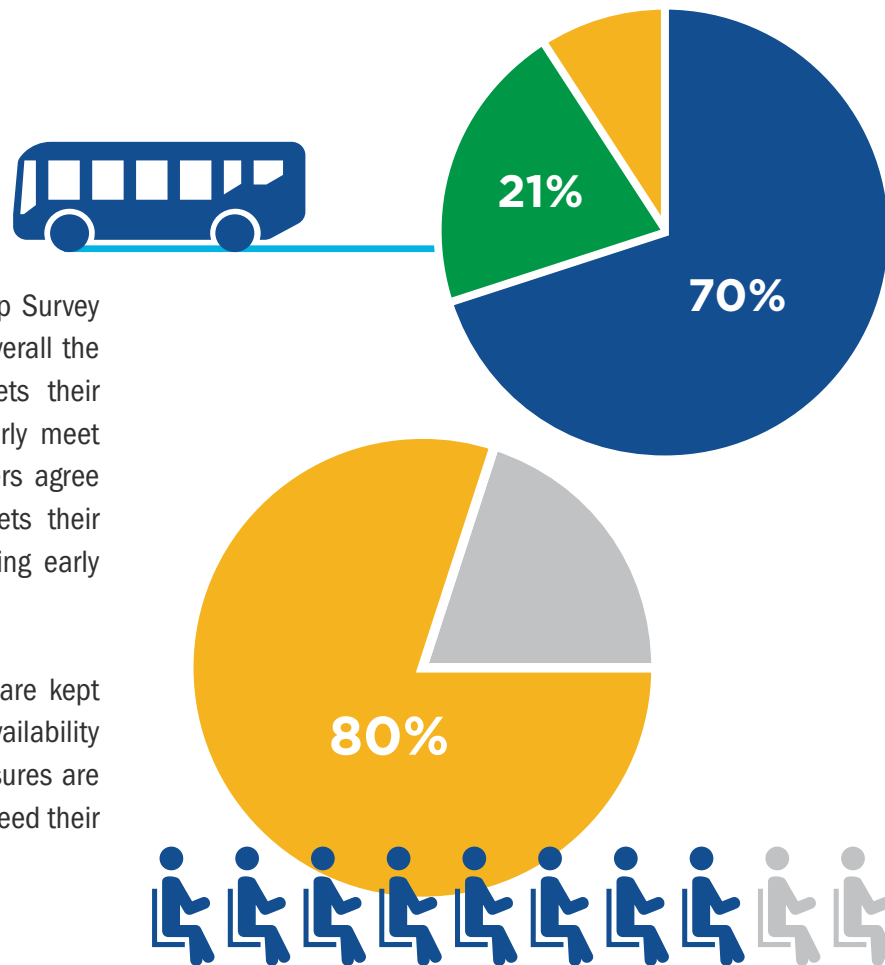


RESEARCH

SUMMARY

Key findings from the 2019 Annual Ridership Survey found that 70% of MCTS riders agree that overall the Milwaukee Transit System exceeds or meets their needs. Another 21% agrees that MCTS nearly meet their needs. Sixty-nine percent of MCTS riders agree that buses not being late exceeds or meets their needs, while 71% agree that buses not being early exceeds or meets their needs.

Most riders feel that the buses themselves are kept reasonably clean inside and outside. Seat availability and the presence of adequate security measures are perceived by 8 out of 10 riders to meet or exceed their needs.



PRIMARY BUS USE

Work continues to be the main reason people ride MCTS buses and these numbers are 10% lower in 2019 when compared to the 2018 survey. Social and recreational activities is the main secondary purpose for riding the bus for 28% of riders, which is a 12% increase from 2018. The 2019 results show an 8% decrease for current wave respondents that use MCTS services for shopping. Eight percent of respondents mention school as a primary reason to use transit, which is down 1% from the 2018 survey. These results are presented in Figure 16.

With regard to other reasons to ride the bus, 28% of respondents report using the bus for recreation or social activities, which is an increase of 12% from the previous wave. Work, shopping, and medical reasons were also popular choices of reasons to use the bus.

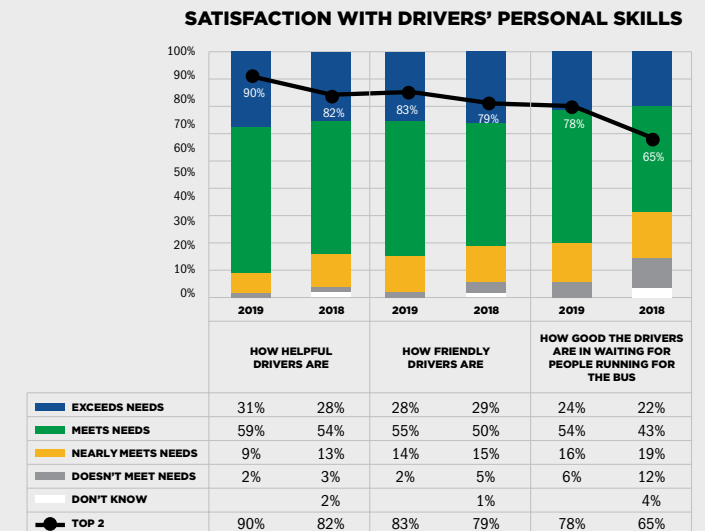
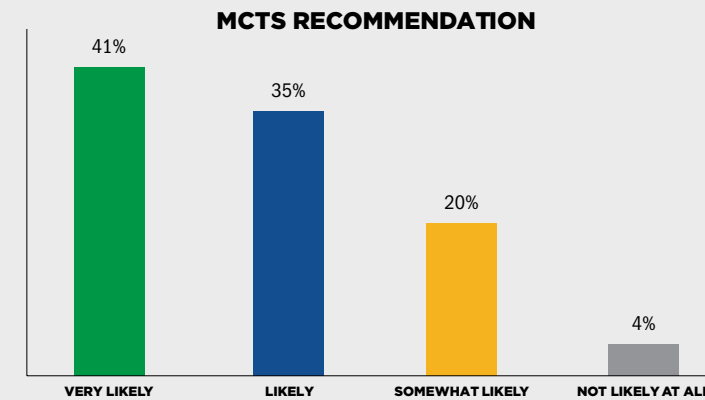
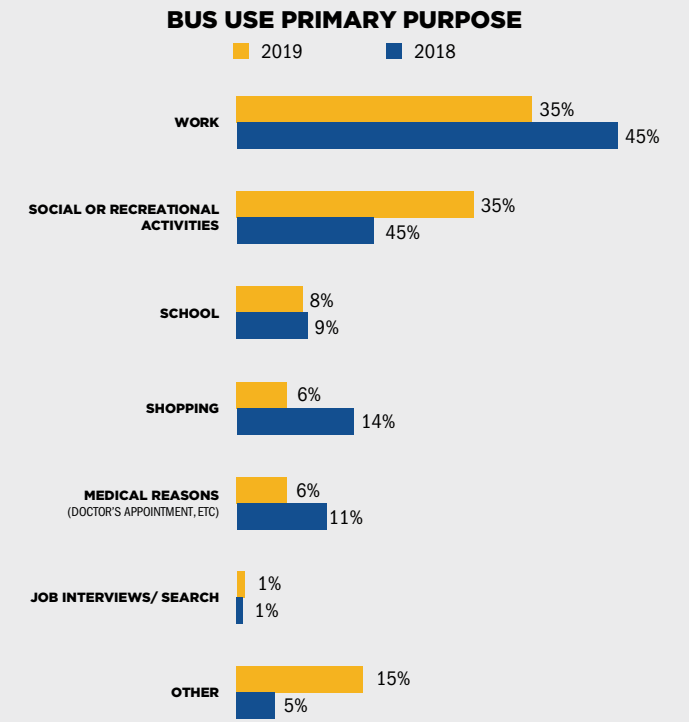
LIKELY TO RECOMMEND

When asked how likely riders are to recommend to others to ride MCTS, 76% responded that they are either likely or very likely to recommend others to ride MCTS. 24% indicated they were somewhat likely or not likely at all to recommend MCTS.

BUS OPERATOR EVALUATION

Respondents were asked to assess their bus driver's ability to know the answers to people's questions and how safely the drivers drove the bus. Eighty-nine percent of respondents felt the driver's ability to answer their questions either met or exceeded their needs. This is a 15% increase over the 2018 results (74%).

In looking at driver safety, 89% of those responding to the 2019 survey agreed that bus driver safety met or exceeded their needs. This is a four percent increase from the 2018 results (85%).



PARTNERSHIPS & SPONSORSHIPS



A FRESH LOOK

MCTS and the South 27th Street Business Improvement District (BID) partnered on a project that will beautify three existing bus shelters on Milwaukee's south side.

The BID is working with local artists and fabricators to produce custom-made metal panels (see the accompanying graphic) that will be installed in place

of glass on three shelters at 27th and Oklahoma, and 27th and Ohio in the coming months.

This project ultimately benefits area businesses, bus passengers and the general public, who will all appreciate the fresh look!

MASKS, MASKS, AND MORE MASKS

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, when Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) -- including masks -- were still in short supply, MCTS developed a partnership with Rebel Converting and Just One More Ministry, to supply MCTS with tens of thousands of disposable masks to protect employees.

We also solicited and obtained disposable and reusable masks from other local businesses and, eventually, the County and Federal government.

Once all employees had proper protection, MCTS launched an extensive effort to distribute masks to our passengers. Transit Security Officers, bus drivers, route supervisors, and marketing "street teams" handed out masks to people at busy bus stops and on board buses. MCTS also eventually installed custom-made dispensers on every bus in the fleet, providing masks to anyone who needs one. To date, we have handed out hundreds of thousands of masks.

Additionally, MCTS was part of multiple local and national public awareness efforts to remind passengers to wear masks -- including "Mask Up MKE" and "Mask Up 2 Vote". We

donated ad space on buses, took part in PSA photoshoots, and attended special "mask making" events for volunteers. MCTS also reached out to the Milwaukee Brewers, Bucks, and Admirals. MCTS created a video of their mascots riding the bus while wearing a mask, to serve as a "fun" reminder for the public.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

For Community Outreach, MCTS developed a strategic community outreach and communications plan with a focus on education (primarily MCTS NEXT).

The Community Outreach & Internal Communications Coordinator identified potential partners to be part of Community Listening Sessions and presentations from our MCTS NEXT database. Organizations or neighborhood groups -- especially from areas of Milwaukee County that we wanted to hear more from.

Several organizations accepted our invitation and welcomed MCTS's Community Outreach & Internal Communications Manager to lead a presentation or be guest speaker at their meetings. Because of COVID-19, all of these sessions -- except one that was outdoors -- were held virtually. Audiences were highly engaged and expressed lots of questions especially about COVID-19 safety on buses and plans for MCTS NEXT.

- Amani Neighborhood/Dominican Center 6/20
- Washington Park Partners 7/6
- Sherman Park Community Association 9/3
- Walnut Way/Lindsay Heights 9/15 and 9/29
- Northwest Community Development Corporation (Panelist for "Addressing and Finding Solutions to Reckless Driving") 9/23
- Southside Organizing Committee - December 2020 (Facebook Live)

From the above presentations and Q&A sessions, more than 200 people heard messages about our:

- Commitment to racial equity
- COVID-19 safety plan
- MCTS seasonal service
- And MCTS NEXT

Another big project for 2020 was the creation of a "Community Page" on RideMCTS.com. Another key objective we accomplished was increasing the amount of marketing materials that were translated into Spanish, include our advertising campaigns.

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH, SPONSORSHIPS AND RELATED EDUCATION AND RACIAL EQUITY OPPORTUNITIES:

To reach MCTS customers in areas of Milwaukee with the highest concentration of COVID-19 cases, led efforts to create prevention and awareness signage. These signs were placed at high traffic bus stops on Milwaukee's near north and south sides. This required hiring a professional service translate into materials into Spanish. We also shared materials with community-based groups and organizations that worked with at-risk populations.

For Historic Milwaukee's Doors Open Milwaukee virtual event, MCTS added another dimension to its involvement with behind-the-scenes photos and action videos.

Spearheaded efforts to update the "Stuff the Bus" logo and to create visual tools to track donations throughout the annual event (virtual in 2020 due to the pandemic).

Expanded MCTS's annual Rosa Parks Tribute with the launch of a scholarship/essay contest. (The 2019 effort won a local Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paragon 'Award of Excellence'.)

Expanded MCTS's role as a sponsor of the Marcus Performing Arts Center's Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. As part of the Bus Shelter Art Project, MCTS is slated to feature the winning student artwork as murals on select bus shelters in honor of Dr. King.



LET'S GET TO WORK

1,440

Commuter Value Pass Participants

45

Participating Companies

70% Account Retention

BUSINESS SERVICES

Our Business Services department was well positioned and prepared to handle the challenges that 2020 presented with creativity and empathy. We maintained a dedicated staffed with one full time account manager and one full time account coordinator. We started the year off strongly with approximately **2,821 Commuter Value Pass participants** across **64 companies**. We also welcomed the addition of the Medical College of Wisconsin running a six month ridership Pilot Program used to gather real rider data, experience and overall help determine future transit offerings to faculty, students, and staff. This pilot was successfully completed, January - June, and has paved the way for Commuter Value Pass and UPASS offerings in the next academic year 2021-2022. Our personal touch account management style and understanding the need to be flexible with many of our partnerships has netted **70% total account retainment** (45 companies) and **49% participant retainment** (1,440 participants). During this year we took advantage of the opportunity to “refresh” the Commuter Value Pass branding and completed a total update of logo and materials; a much welcomed look and feel to promote virtually!

2020 will end the year with **6 participating Universities** serving **over 29,000 eligible students**. Mount Mary University joined the UPASS fare program starting with academic year 2020 - 2021 and we are looking forward to continuing to build this partnership well into years to come. Although the pandemic has had an impact on the amount of students who are taking classes on campus there was still a demand to offer the UPASS to help students not only get to class on campus, but also meeting their transportation needs to maintain essential daily life. Looking forward to 2021 and exploring additional relationships with two Universities and one who may potentially start in Fall 2021.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

Our Customer Service department was well positioned and prepared to handle the challenges that 2020 presented with great agility and empathy. We maintained a dedicated staff of five full time Customer Service Representatives, a Supervisor and Manager. This staffing has allowed us the opportunity to serve approximately **48,000 callers** and **2,100 email inquiries**. The investment in technology - Avaya Telephony System, Microsoft Teams, SharePoint - and wireless headsets coupled with the initiative to create all resources online over the past two years has allowed our team to successfully transition from working in the office setting to working from home.

MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT- COMPLETE THE 2020 CENSUS

Our team's expertise was called in to help Milwaukee County's reach by participating in the 2020 Census. Our team responded to the call for help by asking each MCTS caller if they had completed the 2020 census or if they could do so together. These concentrated efforts helped Milwaukee County reach an **additional 5,000 constituents**.



CUSTOMER SERVICE APPRECIATION WEEK 2020: DREAM TEAM DELIVERING EXCELLENCE

Customer Service joined in on the international celebration for the third year in a row - **Customer Service Appreciation Week** - during the first week of October - all virtually! Our leadership team used their creativity to boost their team's morale during this special week by sending a “Dream Team” special delivery package that contained daily envelopes with challenges and tokens of appreciation. Each daily envelope presented a different theme and focus: Soft skills training, Wellness & Exercise, and MCTS Trivia to expand their knowledge about the company. The Customer Service Representatives also extended this appreciation to our callers by awarding **free MCTS rides** randomly throughout the week- which both helped to **boost morale and deliver Excellence**.



INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

When COVID-19 was declared a public health emergency, MCTS quickly needed a one-stop source for employees that had all the latest news and safety guides. In response, MCTS Marketing created a web page RideMCTS.com/employees. In addition to containing COVID-19 policies and guidelines, this page also has links to other company resources someone might need such as Benefits & Payroll information, the Employee Assistance Program, and a listing of employee COVID-19 Cases.

Our long-time employee newsletter, Inside MCTS, moved to a digital format with its March 2020 issue. It went from being a twice-a-year publication to a monthly one. The format change allowed us to share more timely company news, feature messages directly from MCTS leadership, give details about major projects and plans and allowed all employees (retirees too) to stay better connected with their peers. Inside MCTS features a quick, graphic-rich, easy to read format.

'MCTSTV' monitors at work locations were utilized heavily to inform employees about important COVID-19 information. In addition to the monitors, COVID-19 education and safety signage was placed throughout the Administration building, stations and garages.

Launched the first-ever annual Employee Survey to understand top workplace areas for improvement. As of this writing, the survey is still being fielded. Results will be forthcoming by the end of 2020.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

MCTS rose to unprecedented challenges in terms of communicating important COVID-19 related information to passengers (and also employees).

We utilized our website, social media, audio announcements on buses, traditional news media, paid advertisements, and signage on buses to update the public on the latest policies. This included constantly-evolving messages like:

- Reduced service levels
- Increased service levels
 - Essential travel only
 - Masks recommended
 - Masks required
 - 10 Passengers allowed per bus
 - 15 Passengers allowed per bus



EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Because policies were evolving rapidly, especially at the start of the pandemic, the Marketing Department had to keep signage updated and accurate – while communicating all needed information in a timely manner. Internally, there was also a constant need for updated signage at all of our work locations so that employees had the latest information.

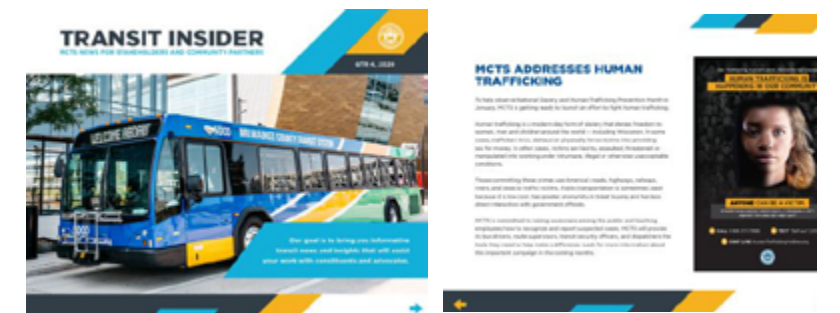
MCTS customers rely on Bus Lines to inform them about new services, upcoming schedule and routes changes, as well as entertaining feature stories about how public transit connects us all. With COVID-19, Bus Lines was a very helpful tool in educating customers about our latest policies. Since the public health emergency began, Bus Lines also shared vital information to riders/readers such as resources in the community like food banks, mental health care and safety from domestic violence.

A special edition of Bus Lines was produced to educate riders about how COVID-19 is transmitted, steps to prevent the spread and related bus policies.

Sought permission from Kroger Foods to have the Bus Lines special edition on display at select Pick N Save Stores.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS

To reach one of the organizational goals - develop sustainable funding and enhance fiscal stability – we launched Transit Insider, a quarterly e-newsletter designed to inform elected officials and other stakeholders about important transit-related news. Two issues were distributed in 2020.



GRAPHIC DESIGN

We worked to curate a refreshed visual direction for the MCTS brand that aligned with our new Mission, Vision and Values. Beginning in 2019, we developed a brand standards guide to help keep the MCTS brand consistent across all mediums. We are continuing to finalize the brand guide so all employees will be able to reference MCTS fonts, logos and images, ensuring consistency with all departments and materials.

We applied our new brand guidelines to develop letterhead, memo and a powerpoint templates available to all employees. Our next steps will be business cards and an email signature. The goal is to have everything look consistent no matter where it comes from in the MCTS organization.

Utilizing our brand standard, we refreshed logos for Transit Plus, Transit Plus Advisory Council, and our UPASS program. We also developed logos for our Commuter Value Pass program and our Rider Insider Newsletter which previously did not have logos. These refreshed logos utilize our MCTS fonts and colors outlined in our brand guidelines which help us maintain brand consistency through all programs and departments.

We also applied our updated brand guidelines to our Public Timetables. This included adding our route imagery and brand fonts to the faceplates of the schedules as well as updating the maps. We coordinated with the Planning department to add and update neighborhoods and major locations on the maps to further illustrate to our riders how MCTS can connect them anywhere they need to go. Adding in Lake Michigan and the rivers to the maps helped our customers understand exactly where in Milwaukee County each route can take them. We received compliments from our riders on the legibility of our newly designed timetables.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

A major system redesign called MCTS NEXT is scheduled to roll out over the course of 2021. Several routes will be updated in Spring, Summer and Fall.

Another major system upgrade is expected to kick off in 2021, the East-West Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Construction on the route (along the current Goldline) is expected to start in the spring.

A heavy emphasis on advertising and community outreach will accompany both of these significant projects.

2021 MARKETING INITIATIVES WILL SUPPORT:

- Restoring and building ridership
- New revenue opportunities
- Expanding partnerships
- Maintaining high customer satisfaction and awareness
- Increasing employee engagement

MCTS NEXT

A robust, year-long educational awareness campaign will be the key to success. For media outreach and community awareness efforts, our objectives are to:

- Secure informative and positive media coverage.
- Receive favorable community feedback.
- Bring riders back to transit

We'll achieve results by doing the following:

- Develop a phased advertising campaign and corresponding web page.
- Messaging for informational community meetings.
- Deploy 'street teams' with system upgrade FAQs.
- Post informational bus stop signage.
- Provide on-board audio messaging and printed materials in the bus information center racks.
- Use social media posts to educate riders and non-

riders.

- Distribute special edition issues of rider and stakeholder e-newsletters.
- Provide press releases to media with important information for the public.

An internal communications campaign will also be deployed:

- Employee webpage with FAQs, maps and videos.
- Internal e-newsletters, TV programming and info sessions with planners.
- Large maps at stations to display new routing for operators.

EAST-WEST BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) CONSTRUCTION

The emphasis on communications in 2021 will be to keep the community and stakeholders apprised of status updates during the construction phase. This is the first BRT in Wisconsin and there will be a lot of interest and questions about the project.

Our objectives will be to:

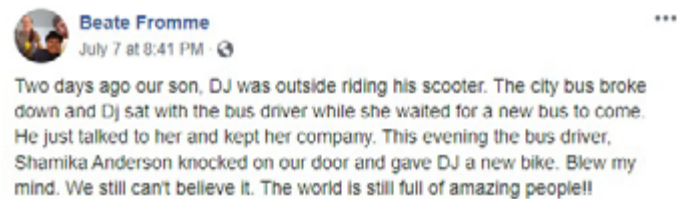
- Secure positive media coverage about construction -- including a groundbreaking ceremony.
- Receive favorable community feedback.
- Announce the branding (name, bus design).
- Encourage non-riders to try the new service when it launches in late 2022.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

MCTS EXCELLENCE VIDEOS

As the pandemic comes to resolution, we will return to our MCTS Excellence series, producing new content that highlights specific examples of bus drivers' kindness, compassion, and heroism. When appropriate, our goal will be to release one video per month.



BRING RIDERS BACK

Even if the pandemic is resolved in 2021, the repercussions will be felt for years to come. Ridership plummeted as people started working from home and became increasingly concerned about their own health. Our challenge in 2021 and beyond will be to bring riders back to public transportation. We will have to highlight all of the ways we're working to keep them safe - while also reminding them of the financial and environmental benefits that come with using public transit.

RIDE MCTS APP UPGRADE

MCTS is working with our app developer, Tixora, on an upgrade to the popular Ride MCTS app. V2 could be released public in early 2021. We will be sure to promote its improvements and new features, in an effort to encourage more people to start using this contactless fare option.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Maximize all internal communications channels to keep everyone informed.

Objectives:

- Increase the number of Inside MCTS monthly e-newsletter subscribers among MCTS employees and retirees.
- Increase the email open rate for Inside MCTS among operators and retirees.
- Produce at least two 'news you can use' videos for TV monitors per month.
- Increase visibility of executive team and directors to front line staff.

Strategies:

- For operators, return to having them sign up for Inside MCTS during their training phase and increase on-site promotion at stations. For retirees, have sign-up opportunities at event their annual events.
- Use tactics to prevent messages from going into junk mail. Use a target segmentation strategy to follow-up with those who have not opened their email. Develop content that is engaging (Ex. Videos and quick polls) and include some element in each issue.
- Collaborate with Training, Customer Service and HR to identify monthly topics for TV segments.
- Investigate new methods of communications such as a monthly podcast, executive and management team info sessions.

TACKLING IMPORTANT ISSUES

TEENS - COMBATting RECKLESS DRIVING, TAKE THE BUS!

For various reasons, many teens in Milwaukee urban neighborhoods perceived having to ride the bus as a negative. This perception has been a contributor (not the sole reason) to the rise in stolen vehicles used in car crashes/reckless driving cases.

With Safe & Sound, Inc., MCTS will create an outreach campaign that aims to resolve perceptions about riding the bus among current and potential customers, especially African American and Latinx American teenagers and young adults.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

MCTS is getting ready to launch an effort to fight human trafficking. The month of January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery that denies freedom to women, men and children around the world - including Wisconsin. In some cases, traffickers trick, defraud or physically force victims into providing sex for money. In other cases, victims are lied to, assaulted, threatened or manipulated into working under inhumane, illegal or otherwise unacceptable conditions.

Those committing these crimes use America's roads, highways, railways, rivers, and skies to traffic victims. Public transportation is sometimes used because it is low cost, has greater anonymity in ticket buying and has less direct interaction with government officials.

MCTS is committed to raising awareness among the public and teaching employees how to recognize and report suspected cases. MCTS will provide its bus drivers, route

supervisors, transit security officers and dispatchers, the tools they need to help make a difference. Then the campaign will expand externally, where we will aim to raise awareness among passengers and the public.



EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY

MCTS expects to work with the City of Milwaukee's Office of Early Childhood Initiatives on efforts to meet families where they are - like at bus stops and on buses- with special resources that encourage parents and guardians to read, talk and sing with their children from the day they're born.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Building on gains made through community outreach efforts in 2020, MCTS is poised to grow its community listening sessions through several means such as (but not limited to):

- Asking community organizations to share our online meeting links with their clients, members and neighbors.
- Promoting sessions via urban and Latin radio, Black and Latinx print news outlets.
- Promoting sessions in Bus Lines and Rider Insider.
- Adding temporary signs about sessions at high traffic bus stops.

As part of our qualitative research, MCTS proposes to partner with community organizations to engage with residents and get their feedback as well as their top concerns regarding bus service. We will take those top concerns and share them as part of our virtual listening sessions. The audience will have the opportunity to give their input and vote on solutions.

In addition to the above actions, for all attendees of our virtual listening sessions,

MCTS will ask for their contact information so we can provide them with quarterly community reports. The report will tell them what we've done to address their concerns.



RESEARCH

It is critical to have a better understanding of the current ridership. Therefore, we are assessing a range of research improvements to obtain a better picture of today's bus rider. To best target riders and non-riders, we must have the best data on demographics, usage, awareness, and barriers. Using the lens of racial equity to base service decisions, MCTS Marketing proposes additional strategies to make sure we have a more accurate sample of riders (and non-riders).

We are developing strategies to boost our customer insights including:

- Conduct regular, short Google surveys.
- Conduct on bus surveys to better understand rider demographics and routing (when we can resume such activities per the pandemic).
- Conduct non-rider focus groups to understand barriers to ridership.
- Investigate opportunity to request demographic information when riders sign up for M-Cards.

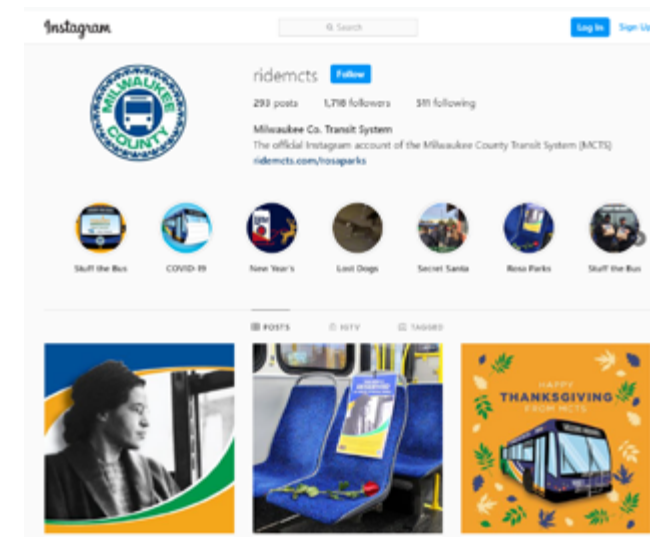
SOCIAL MEDIA

In 2021, MCTS will have to be part of these COVID-19 conversations, though we'll need to assess the topic carefully to ensure our communication is relevant. These topics should shape MCTS's communications over the coming year, adapting as passenger concerns change. We will connect more with our consumers, especially with the use of our newly purchased Meltwater social listening tool, analyzing their conversations to understand the details of their concerns.

All this being said, our goals for 2021 will look a little different than they have in past years. Rather than focusing on engaging content to increase our followers, we need to truly listen to our customers and give them what they need in order to see growth. We predict 2021 will see a lot of experimentation: a year of trying new strategies and new approaches to keep up with our customers' needs.

2021 Objectives

- Increase Facebook & Twitter followers by 5% by end of 2021
- Increase Instagram followers by 10% by end of 2021
- Increase post reach by 2% on Facebook and Twitter by end of 2021
- Increase posts to at least two times per week on Instagram starting in January 2021



2021 Strategies

- Be more socially conscious (advocacy) – consumers are more aware of global issues and how brands tackle them
- Connect to our audience with authentic conversation – listening is important
- Ensure quick follow up to customers
- Continue to create positive engagement and perceptions of MCTS (cleanliness, safety, affordability, equity, etc.)
- Build rider and community trust with influencer marketing
- Post more consistently with quality content
- Increase paid ads (boosted posts) to gain reach
- Collaborate with Business Services to promote university-related content



APPENDIX



PLATFORM ANALYSIS

INSTAGRAM

Our Instagram account saw the most growth of all our accounts in 2020. This was pleasantly surprising considering the fact that we've moved away from purely beautiful photographs to more infographics and serious COVID-19 information. Our best performing content was COVID-related, proving our followers are not only there for our storytelling and happy photos, but they are there for important, relevant information as well.



TOTAL FOLLOWERS
1,715

In 2020, we grew our following by 23%, averaging about 1 new follower per day.

318

NEW FOLLOWERS



OTHER KEY STATS

DIGITAL

Most of our website pageviews come from individuals searching for route timetable information. Since we decreased our maximum passenger counts due to COVID-19, fewer riders have been viewing the same pages every day. We also refreshed the navigation, look and feel of our website at the beginning of October. In doing this, we moved pages around and made it easier for individuals to find the information they need. This may affect our pageviews or session time in 2021. We're pleased our app and Rider Insider users have increased even though we've decreased ridership. Our passengers want to be in the know and also have a contactless form to pay while boarding our buses.



RideMCTS.com

- 459,498 users ↓ -36%
- 7,142,414 pageviews ↓ -16%
- 3,315,549 sessions ↑ 3%



Ride MCTS App

- 128,917 downloads ↑ 22%



Rider Insider

- 54,000 contacts ↑ 11%



PLATFORM ANALYSIS

FACEBOOK

Organic reach on Facebook is at an all-time low. Algorithm changes can explain some of the decline, but a large part is also due simply to increased competition on the platform. According to Facebook, the average user has about 1,500 posts competing to appear in their news feed every time they log on. Facebook's algorithms then select roughly 300 of those posts based on their ranking of how relevant each post is to that user.

Facebook also decided to boost posts from friends and family and "posts that spark conversations and meaningful interactions between people," rather than from businesses. This algorithm change has slightly slowed our engagement from year to year.

However, average reach on Facebook posts in general hovers around 10% or less. We have almost 20,900 followers, and we're actually doing better than most at 10-25% reach per post.



TOTAL FOLLOWERS
20,855

In 2020, we grew our following by nearly 5%, averaging about 3 new followers per day. Our largest follower growth occurred in Q1.



TOTAL REACH
3,008,090

MCTS averaged 300,800 reach per post. This is a 216% increase YOY. Our biggest month for reach was January.



PLATFORM ANALYSIS

TWITTER

Our Twitter account was the slowest-growing and saw the least engagement of all our accounts. Since January, our posts earned approximately 3,000 impressions per day, and our engagement rate was approximately 1.1%. Sources say an engagement rate between 0.33% and 1% is considered to be very high, with expected reactions (clicks, likes, replies, retweets) to be between 3.3 - 10 for every 1,000 Twitter followers. We're currently averaging 8.3 reactions per post. Since we have over 5,000 followers, our reactions should be more like 16.5 to 50. It seems like we need to post more often (repost the same post several times a day) to get our information out there and to elicit the response we'd like.



TOTAL FOLLOWERS
5,411

In 2020, we grew our following by 5%, averaging about 1 new follower per day.



TOTAL REACH
939,300

MCTS averaged 93,900 reach per month. This is a 75% decrease YOY. Our biggest month for reach was May.