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Fare Change Campaign Strives to Inform Internal and External Audiences

Multiple channels used to reach riders

By NED RACINE

(June 14, 2007) When the Metro Board adopted a new fare structure for bus and rail service, May 24, its decision launched an elaborate campaign to inform internal and external audiences that fares were changing for the first time in 3 ½ years.

"Communicating internally is the first priority," said Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond. "Our operators serve as ambassadors to our customers on this and any change we do."



^Click on image to enlarge.

As part of Metro's campaign to inform its staff and riders of the new fare structure, point of purchase posters like these will be distributed to Metro pass and token sales vendors.

Yvonne Price, senior marketing and communications officer, noted the information must also reach "our customer information group, the telephone information operators, our customer centers, so that they are ready with the exact same information that we're giving to the public."

Metro will distribute 123,000 brochures describing the new fare structure, 2,500 on-board bus posters and 450 on-board rail posters.

But brochures represent only the tip of a hefty iceberg. Other channels include the message callers hear when waiting to speak to someone at Metro. Metro Briefs newspaper ads, the Metro Monthly customer newsletter and fare descriptions on metro.net will reach out to the public at-large.

'Campaign requires coordination'

"The work involves a tremendous number of people," said Price. The campaign requires coordination among at least half a dozen people who are key contacts for getting several other kinds of things done."

Within the Metro system, bus car cards and rail posters will reach riders, as will decals on fare boxes and instructions from ticket vending machines. Map case backlit signs in stations will address riders there.

The three Transit Center kiosks at LAX, Fox Hills and UCLA will post information on the new fares, as will Metro's customer service centers.

Edith Goff-Youngblood, senior customer service officer, began a campaign with her Metro pass and token sales vendors by sending a letter notifying them that the Board was considering fare changes. She sent that letter to her almost 650 vendors in late April. Goff-Youngblood also informed the approximately 40 cities that subsidize residents' Metro fares.

The 4,500 Metro bus and rail operators must also be trained in the new fare structure. Price will deliver publications, including copies of frequently asked questions (FAQs), to Aurora Jackson director of Operations Training, for use in Central Instruction.

Operators will have the option of circulating the FAQs sheets to riders.

Fare increase information will be posted at the operating divisions and service sector offices as well.

Price has worked with Donna Blanchard, rideshare accounts supervisor; Rob Hartert, printing services supervisor; Chip Hazen, ADA compliance administrator; Terry Matsumoto, chief financial services officer; April McKay, director, customer programs and services; and Marcelo Melicor, revenue collections manager.

For employee transportation coordinators, who manage rideshare and van pool programs at their organizations, Metro will send e-mail blasts to inform them of the new fare structure and will provide posters for their use in informing their employees.

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