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Metro's rebranding campaign established Metro in the Los Angeles landscape.

## Metro Wins International Award for Revamped Agency Image

(Oct. 9, 2008) In an international competition involving some of the world's largest and best-known organizations, Metro has been named one of five Best of Award winners of the [2008 Rebrand 100](#), a tribute to the agency's success in creating a new image for Metro in the public's mind.

The annual competition includes Fortune 50 corporations, small businesses, nonprofit organizations, cities and universities, according to the organization's website. Metro's work triumphed over competitors as diverse as Coca-Cola Bulgaria, the San Francisco Ballet and Delta Airlines.

Maya Emsden, DEO, creative services, was pleased the award was given "not for a particular project or campaign, but for our overall efforts to transform the public's perception of Metro."

The ReBrand organization states the Best of Award commendations go to organizations showing the "highest level of brand transformations and effectively meeting strategic goals and forging strong connections and loyalty among their target audiences."

"This is not an industry award," Emsden explained. "It was against private sector organizations that devote millions and millions of dollars to their brands. And I don't think any of them do it in-house as we are doing."

Metro Communications staff initiated the effort to improve the agency's identity back in 2003. An extensive audit of the agency's communications channels, as well as a review of general public and customer surveys, revealed a significant degree of public confusion about what the agency was and did.

To address this, Metro staff studied companies with strong and highly

regarded brands, such as FedEx, UPS, Apple, Target, Transport for London, etc. According to Emsden, all these brands had a visually unified look and a carefully monitored set of guidelines to ensure consistency of look and voice across their channels of communications.

Metro chose strong new design standards, accompanied by the important establishment of a voice for advertising and other communications. Simple sentence structures and a warm and conversational tone with a touch of humor are now part of Metro's signature brand, Emsden added.

As stated on the ReBrand award website, since the rebranding effort began, 81 percent of Los Angeles residents say Metro's image is improving and the agency's "Neutral" to "Strongly Favorable" rating now stands at 88 percent. Perhaps the most significant sign of the rebranding effort's success is discretionary ridership, which has risen from 22 to 29 percent, an increase of more than twice the national average.

Metro was named America's Best Transportation Agency by APTA in 2006.

Emsden admits that she was surprised by the Rebrand 100 award. "It was a long shot, but I think the panel was impressed by the fact that we are a public agency, it was done in-house and it impacts so many millions of people."

In August, Metro Communications won seven of the prestigious 2008 [Adwheel Awards](#).