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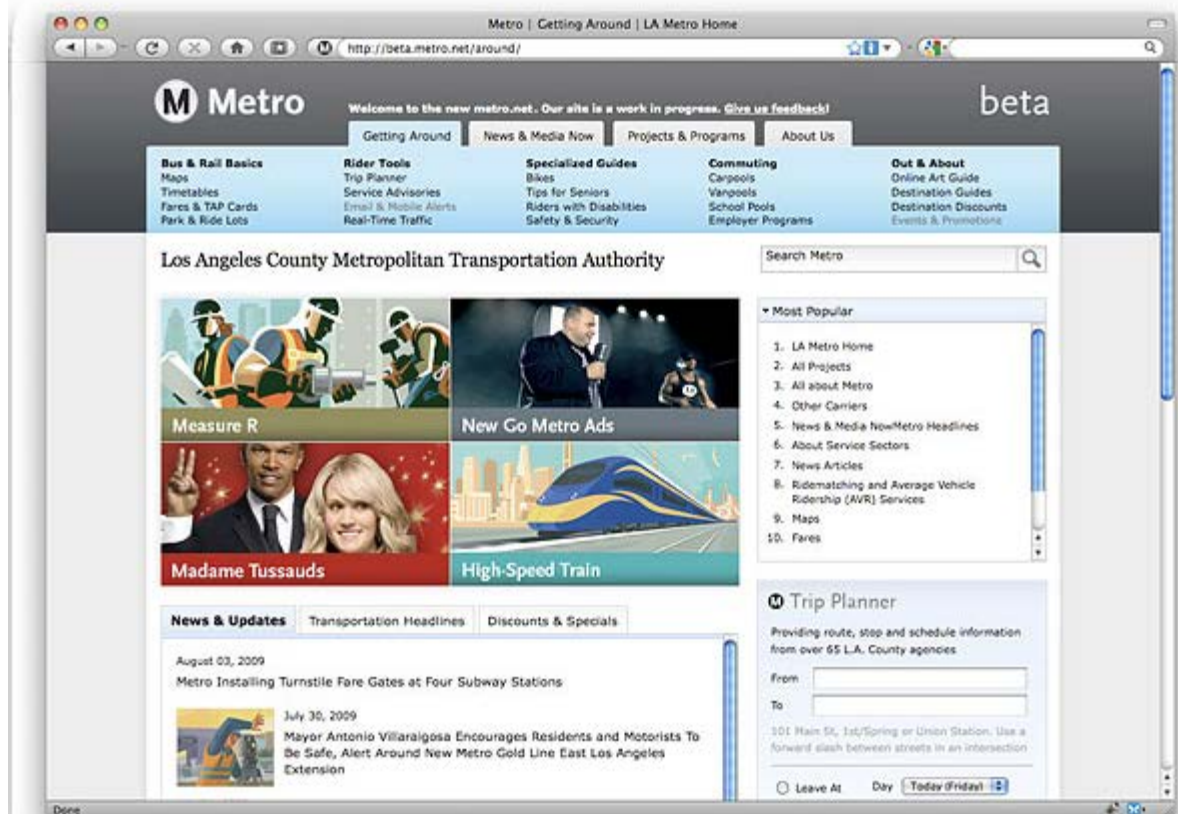
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Feedback wanted: Check it out at beta.metro.net/around

Metro.net beta takes a new direction with fresh look, richer content – and it's easy to use and access anywhere, anytime.

By Vivian L. Tran
Web Content Manager

(August 20, 2009) Get a sneak preview of the new *metro.net* now.

The retooled website rolls out this week as a test version with easy to read and use web pages, greater access to a wide variety of information, a fresh design and extra features.

Focused on the customer, the website is a comprehensive, one-stop destination site that showcases Metro as a world-class transportation agency.

"We want to take the lead with a cutting-edge website that is easy to use and easy to navigate through information. It's not just about updating a website," says Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond.
"Metro.net should be available to anyone

who wants to access our information anytime and anywhere they want it."

The test version provides Metro with an opportunity to share the new site and develop it further based on customer comments and feedback via an online survey.

Customers will be able to access *metro.net* from their desktop computers or any personal hand-held devices, including cell phones, Blackberries and iPhones. Special features such as RSS feeds will help disseminate and push out information to online users.

"We want *metro.net* to be an active site where online visitors can come each day and find interesting, new information," Raymond says.

The popular *metro.net* site currently receives more than 500,000 online visitors each month and provides information that serves the needs of transit riders, voters, taxpayers, stakeholders, planners, businesses and other constituent groups and communities.

What's new on the site?

The beta website at <http://beta.metro.net/around> was developed using visitor metrics and is rich with content, including tools for riders, more trip planning options with Google Maps, service advisories, videos and movies, top news stories, photo galleries and slideshows, interactive maps, RSS feeds and much more.

The new [Getting Around](#) homepage features four new tabs, dozens of links for fast and direct access to information, and a parade of appealing graphics. It's easier for online customers to browse all the information they need to know about how to ride Metro, including maps, timetables, fares & TAP, park and ride lots, and rider guides. It also offers destination guides, promotions and links to popular pages.

So what is a beta version?

Quite simply, a beta version means that the new site is a first, trial phase. Rebuilding *metro.net* is a multi-year project that will be rolled out incrementally in phases. This first test phase will require the web staff to fix bugs on a daily basis. Not all the web pages are fully polished. Some may seem plain or lack corresponding images, interactive functions, and Flash videos.

Why rebuild *metro.net*?

Metro.net was originally built on older web technology that consisted of static webpages, which required manual updates. As *metro.net* grew too large with about 8,000 webpages and more than 8,600 pdfs, it became more difficult to maintain. The new beta *metro.net* is built on a Content Management System called Django that will allow for easier updates



Beta test site may load slowly on Explorer 6 browser

If you are accessing the beta version of the new *metro.net* from your work computer, you may see a slight delay for the screen to completely load if you are using Internet Explorer 6 (IE6). As some of our business applications require IE6 to function, ITS is working with various vendors to obtain a software patch that would allow their product to work with IE7. You will only notice this slight delay in loading the screen if you are viewing the site from within Metro and have IE6.

and maintenance of the site.

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