CTA’s Real-Time Customer Information Initiatives

February 23, 2010

Chicago Transit Authority

- **bus times**: see estimated arrivals
- **bus map**: see where buses are
- **subscribe**: send a text message, get arrivals
  receive arrivals and alerts by e-mail or text message
Benefits of Real-Time Transit Information

• **Real-time customer information promotes transit usage**
  - Access to real-time information reduces customer uncertainty about wait times
  - Quality, reliable information attracts new and more frequent ridership

• **External partnerships increases transit awareness**
  - Public information feed extends information beyond CTA’s resources and reach
  - Promotes a good will service and awareness of transit availability
CTA Bus Tracker provides real-time bus arrival locations and arrival estimates via the web, mobile devices, text messaging, and subscriptions.

- Public launch of routes began in April 2008
- Email subscriptions introduced in May 2009
- API for developers released September 2009
- Text messaging launched December 2009

Subscriptions Via Email or Text

Two-Way Text Messaging

Third Party Applications (iTunes)
Public APIs and CTA’s Developer Center

• Release of API (application programming interface) information feed expands access to real-time information and creates transit-promoting partnerships
  ▪ Developer Center site also includes Customer Alert API and other data feeds

• Community partnerships: Wicker Park Bucktown
  ▪ Pilot project implemented displays in neighborhood establishments (cafes, retail stores, community offices)
  ▪ WPB SSA generated digital sign concept and funded program
  ▪ RedPost developed custom sign interface and online content management system

• School partnerships: DePaul University
  ▪ DePaul utilized API to add Bus Tracker arrival estimates to existing digital signage at its downtown campus building
  ▪ Promotes transit options for DePaul’s commuter students and between its two campuses
  ▪ School initiative builds on existing CTA relationships (U-PASS universities)
Partnerships to Expand Bus Tracker Access

Wicker Park Bucktown Displays

DePaul Center Display
Upcoming Real-Time Initiatives: Displays

• Do-It-Yourself Electronic Displays
  ▪ Web-based application to present easily customized displays of stop-specific arrival estimates
  ▪ Pilot with partner organizations to display information in public spaces. Interest expressed by Chicago Public Schools, private buildings and small businesses

• Arrival Displays at Bus Shelters & Rail Stations
  ▪ Grant to pilot a limited number of LED and LCD displays to promote multimodal transit
  ▪ Additional content can be added and customized based on location
  ▪ Display format, content, placement to be evaluated
Upcoming Initiatives: Train Tracker

- Development of train arrival estimates
  - Real-time train location information is based on track circuit indications and is currently used by operating personnel
  - Arrival estimates are being refined and presentation of content is under development
  - Primary focus of train arrival information will be existing and new station displays
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