Using Social Media Effectively

Western Contra Costa Transit Authority
Presented by
Yvonne Morrow
Marketing Coordinator
Western Contra Costa Transit Authority
A recent report *TCRP Synthesis 99: Uses of Social Media in Public Transportation*, published by the Transportation Research Board, set out to explore how public transit agencies have put the channel to work and to investigate the barriers to implementing social media. For the purposes of the report, social media is defined as “a group of web-based applications that encourage users to interact with one another, such as blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Foursquare, and MySpace.” The report documents current practices and shares lessons learned.
Introduction

WestCAT is a service of the Western Contra Costa Transit Authority.

Cities served are Pinole, Hercules, unincorporated Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, Bayview, Rodeo, Crockett, and Port Costa.

Pop. 64,925. Est. in 1977.

Local, Express (BART), Regional (Martinez, CC College), Transbay (San Francisco), and Dial-A-Ride.
WestCAT is a Small Agency

- 8 Local routes
- 4 Express routes to BART
- 2 Regional routes
- 1 Transbay route to San Francisco
- Curb-to-Curb Dial-A-Ride
WestCAT has 7 Fulltime Staff Members

- General Manager
- Transit Planner
- Marketing Coordinator
- Maintenance Manager
- Bookkeeper
- DBE Liaison Officer
- Front Desk Clerk
WestCAT uses Outside Consultants & Contractors for:

- Information technology (IT)
- Website design and management
- Operations
  - Dispatchers (includes ADA Coordinator)
  - Drivers
  - Safety & Training (Road Sups, Safety Mngr.)
  - Maintenance
  - Management Staff
Who is your audience?

- The Press
- Your Riders
- The General Public
- Your Peers
- Public Officials
- Community Activists
- Government Agencies
Outline Your Objectives

- **Network**
  - *Share ideas and information with your peers*
- **Inform**
  - *Service Alerts*
  - *Announcements*
- **Improve**
  - *Public Outreach*
  - *Community Engagement*
- **Educate**
  - *General Service Information*
  - *Press Releases*
- **Assess**
  - *Online Customer Satisfaction Surveys*
  - *Online comments/replies to posts or “Tweets”*
• Decide what Social Media is best suited for your agency.
  ◦ Twitter
  ◦ Facebook
  ◦ YouTube
  ◦ Other (LinkedIn, Skype, Yelp, Blogs, Your Agency’s Website)
Twitter is a real-time communication network where you can stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent messages. People write short updates, called "Tweets" of 140 characters or fewer. These messages are posted to your profile, sent to your followers, and are searchable on Twitter search.
Millions of people use Facebook everyday to keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos, and learn more about the people they meet.
www.facebook.com/wcctta
YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally-created videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWckXHojurM
You can incorporate a Twitter news feed onto the front page of your own website and people visiting your site can read your most recent “tweets”.

Some examples would be:
- Board meeting cancellations
- Service delays
- New schedule announcements
Use Facebook to provide info about an important meeting or event
• Decide who will set-up and administer the account and who will manage the content.
  • Marketing Department
  • IT Department
  • Webmaster
  • Another individual on your staff
Each provider offers help.
You don’t have to be a pro
• Decide who will be allowed to post to the various social media accounts and what they will be posting.
  ◦ Marketing
  ◦ Dispatch
  ◦ Management
  ◦ Safety & Training
• Create a guide to include a set of usage policies & procedures (Dos and Don'ts).
  ◦ Place in a central location
  ◦ Designate users within the procedures
  ◦ Include simple directions for signing on/off the account
  ◦ Include examples of acceptable posts or “tweets”
  ◦ Assign someone to monitor usage and content daily

“You are what you Tweet”
“A small voice in a big region”

Smart Ways to Use Social Media
Social media is a *catalyst* that works most effectively when it is combined with all of your agency’s other activities.
“Instead of focusing on quantity, let's focus on the quality of each follower you gain. I'd much rather have 100 engaged, participating followers than 100,000 disinterested random people.”

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/7182925
Who is really seeing your Tweets?

WestCAT
215 Followers

511 Contra Costa
1,296 followers

Mercury News
2,965 Followers

Pinole Patch
174 Followers
Your Tweet was retweeted!

WestCAT Transit
@WCCTA

For comments, complaints, etc. please email us at info@westcat.org or use our online comments form at westcat.org/administration...

Retweeted by

Chris Treadway @christreadway

Learn more about @christreadway.
What message do you want to send?
WestCAT News Release

Contact: Yvonne Morrow
Title: WestCAT Marketing Director
Office: (818) 724-3331 ext. 117
Email: yvonne@westcat.org

For Immediate Release
Posted 30 April 2012

WestCAT Recipient of CalACT’s Prestigious "Outstanding Transportation Agency" Award for 2012

Pine, April 30, 2012 the Western Contra Costa Transit Authority (WCCTA) was selected by its peer agencies throughout California as the 2012 recipient of CalACT's prestigious "Outstanding Transportation Agency" award. The award was received by WestCAT’s General Manager, Charles Anderson during CalACT's 2012 Spring Conference and EXPO that took place in Newport Beach, CA the week of April 25, 2012.

* CalACT (California Association for Coordinated Transportation) is the largest state transit association in the United States, with nearly 300 members dedicated to promoting professional excellence, stimulating ideas and advocating for effective community transportation. Its members include Public Transit Operators, Non Profit Transportation and Human Service Agencies, Local of Regional Government Agencies, State and Federal Agencies, Universities and Colleges, Associations, and Tribal Transportation providers.

In addition to celebrating receipt of this award, WestCAT is also celebrating two milestone anniversaries this year. WestCAT’s General Manager, Charles Anderson is celebrating his 25th anniversary at the agency, and WestCAT itself is celebrating its 35th anniversary.

WestCAT has a very loyal and stable workforce, 43 of 63 drivers have over 5 years seniority, 1 driver over 30 years seniority, 5 drivers over 20 years seniority, and 18 drivers over 10 years seniority. Also, CalACT's contractor, MV Transportation's Manager, Assistant Manager and Payroll clerk each have 25+ years seniority. The loyalty and stability of the WestCAT workforce (the drivers, dispatchers, mechanics, utility crew and administrative staff) is just a part of what has made WestCAT what it is today. The support of WestCAT's peers, and the dedication and commitment of the WestCAT Board of Directors and strong leadership of its General Manager have been vital to the survival of the agency. However, most importantly the loyal support and patronage of WestCAT's passengers and the community is what has really kept it going strong for all of these years.

Include links to news on your own website
WestCAT Agency Receives Statewide Transit Honor

The transit agency that runs buses around Pinole and Hercules — with connections to Martinez and El Cerrito — has won a statewide award among its California transportation association. The Western Contra Costa Transit Authority has been chosen the "Outstanding Transportation Agency" by the California Association for Coordinated Transportation.

WestCAT General Manager Charles Anderson received the award during a conference at Newport Beach during the week of April 25, according to a WestCAT news release.
CONGRATS TO WESTCAT!

Congratulations and Happy Anniversary to the West Contra Costa Transit Authority, better known as WestCAT!
WestCAT Lynx, BART Express show robust ridership growth

By Tom Lochner
Centro Costa Times
Posted: 02/09/2012 13:26:31 PM PST

WestCAT commuter buses are showing robust ridership gains this year, officials say.

Lynx, which links the Rodeo-Hercules area with San Francisco’s Transbay Terminal and offers free Wi-Fi service, logged 14,321 one-way trips in February, or 14.7 percent more than the same month last year, according to transit agency data.

For the first eight months of the fiscal year, there were 114,058 one-way Lynx trips, 6.6 percent more than the same period in Fiscal 2010-11.

Other WestCAT routes, too, have seen a ridership increase. BART Express buses connecting Hercules, Pinole and Richmond’s Hilltop area with the El Cerrito Del Norte/BART station logged 54,780 trips in February, up 13.5 percent from a year ago.

WestCAT marketing coordinator Yvonne Morrow attributes the increased ridership to a variety of factors.

"We have really noticed a jump in passengers since gas prices have increased over the $4 per gallon mark," she said Friday.

Additionally, in November the agency added a larger-capacity Lynx bus that can carry at least 10 more passengers, she said.

The agency expects to take delivery of two more 57-passenger buses in late-March, which could prompt another boost, Morrow said.

Local WestCAT routes in Rodeo, Crockett, Hercules, Pinole and Richmond’s Hilltop area showed more modest ridership increases, as did the Martinez Link express route between Martinez and El Cerrito Del Norte/BART via Hercules, Pinole and Richmond, she said.

Advertisement

Contact Tom Lochner at 510-263-2760.
• Don’t micro-manage (filter down posts to only the most glowing)
• Be engaged (post regular updates)
• Be a valuable resource
• Be honest
• Be proactive
• Be concise (this is especially true with Twitter)

How do we manage our social identity?
Questions?