

Reaching new riders...

Occasional Riders

RTA Market Development Initiatives

Occasional Riders are travelers that use transit services infrequently.

The Chicagoland region – and its transit system – are active throughout the day and on weekends. Over **700,000**, or 44%, of daily transit trips in the region are taken for non-work purposes, including shopping, event, and leisure travel. Residents use transit to get to medical appointments and festivals. Tourists use transit to visit sites. Business travelers use transit to access airports, hotels and meetings.

The range of “occasional riders “ have similar general movement characteristics. They often travel outside of regular commute times, when capacity is available on the existing transit network. They also tend to be open to using transit, but are unfamiliar with transit options available to them.

The RTA is investing in marketing, travel information, and signage that will help occasional riders use the existing transit system. In conjunction with the Service Boards, the RTA is also exploring new services that specifically serve visitor markets.



Opportunities

Regional Households Know About Transit. The 2007-2008 CMAP Travel Tracker Survey found that 38% of households in the region had at least one member who used transit at least once per week. This shows that many regional households are aware of transit as an option for travel.

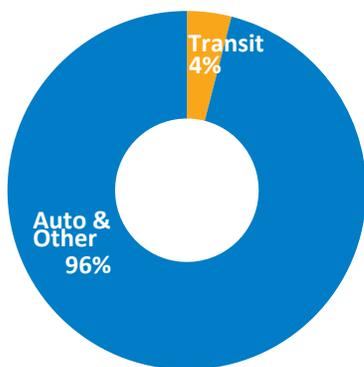
Willingness to Utilize Transit. 56% of respondents in an 2013 APTA summer travelers survey indicated that they plan on using public transportation for at least one activity while visiting another city. Moreover, the majority of respondents with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more said that they will rely on public transportation during their trip.

Large Market. Ten million trips are taken from homes to non-work destinations each day in the Chicago region, and only 4% of these trips utilize transit. In 2012, 45 million *domestic* visitors came to Chicago, up 6.2% from the year before. In addition, *international* tourism climbed to 1.2 million people, up 3.2% from the year before. Combined, the **46 million** visitors in total were just shy of the tourism record set in 2007.



10 Million

Daily trips are made between home and non-work destinations, with only 400,000, or 4%, of them using transit



46 Million

Visitors came to the Chicago region in 2012

Every 1% increase in transit ridership from this market could yield an additional 1.3 million transit trips annually.



Challenges

Diverse Market. Occasional riders represent a diverse market segment that includes residents, out of town visitors, international travelers, and business travelers. While they share general travel characteristics, their specific transit service needs and modal considerations vary widely. Thus, each of these groups require unique consideration when designing targeted marketing.

Transit Familiarity. Many occasional riders are unfamiliar with the area, unfamiliar with their destinations, and/or unfamiliar with transit options.

Special Event Transit Services. Many regional visitors are attending special events, such as sports venues, concerts, and festivals. These events occur at specific times and places and attract large numbers of people. Transit services must often be designed or altered accordingly, which can be costly for transit agencies and challenging to coordinate.

Fare Media. Occasional riders may also be unfamiliar with fare structures and fare media for the three Service Boards. Ventra and a regional fare system will help alleviate this challenge, but there is still a need for education and shared fare products for visitors.

Current Activities

Real Time Signage in Support of CDOT Central Loop BRT Project. The RTA is in the process of reserving ICE funds to help support the engineering and implementation of real time signage in support of the CDOT Central Loop BRT project.

Special Events Service Fund. The RTA is working to establish a Special Events Service Fund to serve the occasional riders market. ICE funds will be available for operations, marketing and other associated costs for service to/from special events within the region.

RTA Trip Planner Promotion. The RTA Trip Planner is an essential tool for many customers that ride transit only occasionally, as it allows them to get step-by-step trip plans, real-time information, bus/train schedules and travel alerts. The RTA is working to promote its utility and use through a consumer marketing campaign.

Visitor Survey. The RTA, in conjunction with IDOT, CTA, Metra, Pace, CMAP, and CDOT, will be administering a visitor survey to better understand regional visitor travel patterns and needs.

Success Story



RTA Interagency Signage Program.

The RTA Interagency Signage Program is collaborative effort between the RTA, Service Boards, and municipal partners to create a new system of wayfinding signage at stations and bus stops to make transferring between transit services easy - even for the novice transit customer. The signage program has been installed at four pilot sites in the region, with many more stations to come.