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Introduction

Switching to public transport' has been an innovative action in many respects: It has confirmed in practice the new "customer consciousness" that has been developing in the public transport industry over the last few years.

Following the EUROBAROMETER study in 1991, the research showed that the public's attitude to public transport was very favourable. However this was not reflected in their behaviour. That is to say, most people like to think of 'other people using public transport' but not themselves. However, in the last five years everyone is having to face up to the mobility crisis particularly in our urban areas, and this has included having to change habits and our chosen mode of transport.

In this report you will find a clear and concise introduction to Individualized Marketing, adapted to the public transport industry. It is available in two parts - the report and the technical handbook. The report covers the general concept of individualized marketing while the technical handbook goes into greater detail about the projects and some individual members of the experiment give their views and comments on the how effective the actions were.

It is interesting to note from the results, that a great potential for increasing the patronage of Public Transport lies in off-peak times, by the infrequent users of Public Transport, but not with the people who never used Public Transport. This means patronage can be increased without expensive system improvements, although the effects are increased if the two are made in parallel. The increased patronage comes from customers who, in general, are not reluctant to use the system, but they need additional motivation and advice that enables them to make more trips by public transport.

This experiment, with over forty operators in Europe, shows that effective marketing in Public Transport can increase very convincingly the level of ridership. The experiment has been made in partnership with UITP members and our Associate Member SOCIALDATA (Munich).

It has also shown UITP's unique position to provide the organisational framework for this form of collaboration. It has been an interesting exercise for UITP and the results show that marketing can have a positive effect on getting people to 'Switch to Public Transport'.

Pierre Laconte
UITP

SOICIALDATA has been active in research on mobility behaviour for more than 25 years now - and ever since all results show that - in terms of increasing public transport patronage - subjective ("soft") factors (system perception) are as important as objective ("hard") factors (actual system). Following these findings, SOCIALDATA has developed an innovative marketing approach called "Individualized Marketing". The concept had been tested in a number of pilot projects and had proven to be highly successful.

It was therefore our great pleasure to get the opportunity to test this idea in an international demonstration project called "Switching to Public Transport". Together with UITP and more than 40 transport companies from all over Europe marketing projects were conducted. The result is that - if properly applied - personalized encouragement/motivation and information lead to considerable increases in public transport patronage.

The experiences of "Switching to Public Transport" has also helped to develop other marketing concepts which can be applied on large-scales - and increases public transport patronage and revenues significantly.

In this respect, this report not only presents the results of a successful international demonstration project but an important marketing tool for the coming century.

Werner Brög
SOCIALDATA



Switching to Public Transport – Part 2

Technical Handbook

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