

Integrated Marketing and Communication Plan for 2019-2021



Overview

This marketing plan outlines clear strategies and tactics designed to help **meet organizational marketing and communication objectives** in order to build awareness and ridership.

Transit ridership is falling in 31 out of 35 major U.S. transit markets. This is due to shifting demographics, legislation (e.g. AB 60 allows undocumented residents the ability to apply for and receive a driver's license), cheap gas and car loans, the proliferation of the ride-sharing mentality, attacks on public transit by conservative PACs, and infrastructure challenges within transit systems themselves.

Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) has not been exempt from these forces. There's been a slight general overall decline in its average fixed-route* monthly ridership of 0.5% between 2016-and 2018, which is more pronounced in some months than others.

That said, MST's culture of relationship building and innovation has mitigated much of the impact that other transit agencies experience. **Loyal riders, employees, and community partners are tremendous assets** which can amplify its marketing and promotional endeavors.

*does not include paratransit services

Overarching Marketing and Communication Goals

MST has identified several overarching marketing goals which include the following:

1. Retain existing riders and enhance the customer experience
2. Increase passenger boardings on fixed routes
3. Improve and promote customer and stakeholder satisfaction with MST services

Overarching Strategies

1. Focus on system-wide improvements to cement rider loyalty and attract new riders
2. Create a solid brand foundation
 - A. MST = ???
 - B. Dissolve the boundaries between brand and experience
3. Integrate all marketing communications: Systematically deploy initiatives across multiple communications and marketing channels to leverage budget and results.
4. Continue to develop strategic partnerships that create synergy and generate new riders
5. Fortify internal communications initiatives that reward and leverage employee service. (As within, so without.)

Systemwide Improvements

Secondary research indicates that transit agencies that make system-wide improvements, that don't just focus on one line at a time, are the places where ridership is on the rise. During the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) session, several key observations were made that support this theory, some of which were validated during analysis of survey data.

Those observations are included here as they will prove particularly beneficial to the price/product mix and increasing ridership. They are:

- Locate and obtain more grants in order to underwrite free ride services. (Note: 90% off pricing doesn't move the needle, only free does.) This is especially important during this period of massive disparate income levels in a place where it is very expensive to live. (See Justice map for Monterey County income data.) Finding community partners may be helpful for obtaining grants in addition to growing ridership.
- Add more express services to create shorter travel times.
- During times of peak ridership in the summer tourist season, adjust published arrival times to manage rider expectations and mitigate delays due to traffic congestion.
- Conduct more human trafficking trainings ahead of the regulatory timetable. While drivers have already completed an initial training in partnership with Safe Place, there is an opportunity here to model human trafficking prevention best practices at a time when people feel vulnerable, scared, and polarized.

1. Brand Development

Evidence of Distinction

Create a Solid Brand Foundation

MST already has much of what it needs to effectively communicate a solid brand.

It has an engaged board, an innovative and dedicated team, and a devoted ridership.

And it's in an unusual situation where it can dissolve the boundaries between brand and experience. In other words, MST is almost there, it just needs to cross the finish line. It needs to identify, prove and develop its own unique "Evidence of distinction."

MST must complete this equation:

What does MST =

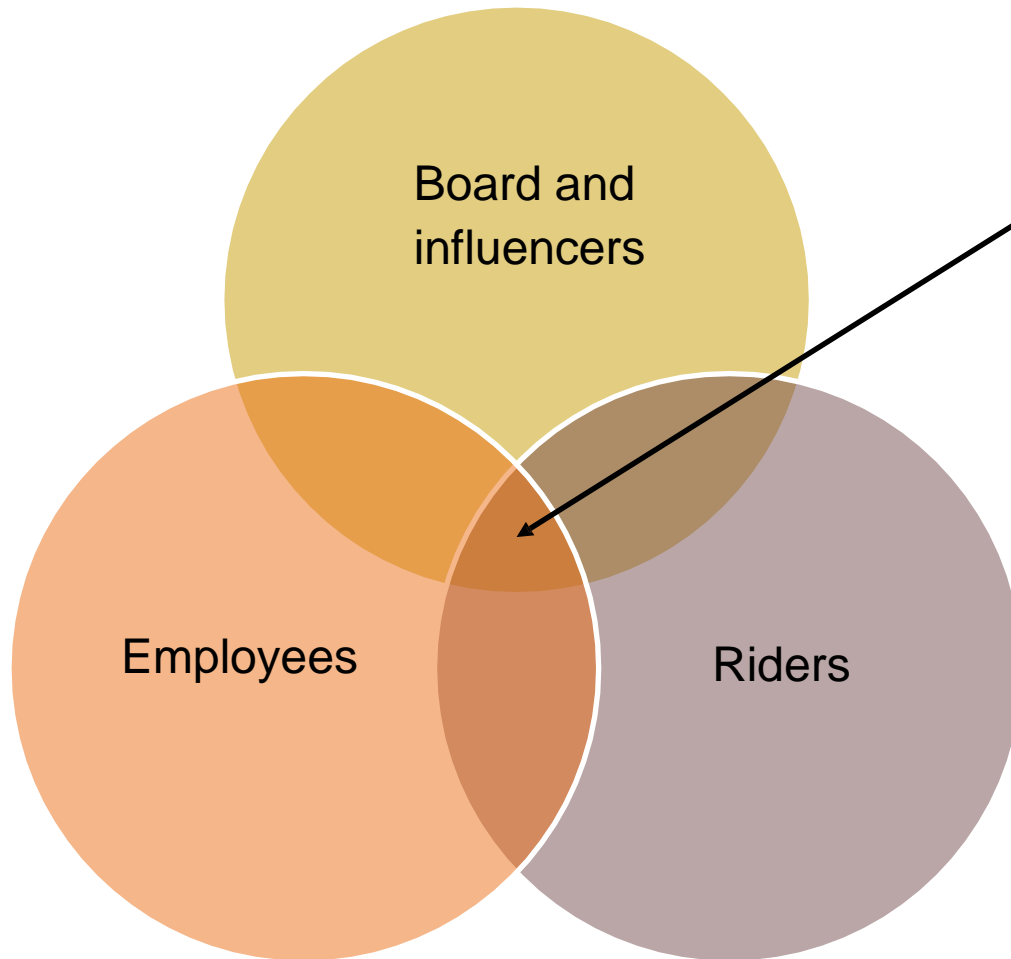
Branding vs brand development

Brand development is the discovery of a brand's unique distinction and the development of a strategy to communicate that distinction. The definition of a brand is "Evidence of distinction."

Branding, on the other hand, is the tactical application of that distinction in or on all marketing materials, both internal and external.

Branding and brand development are mutually exclusive functions—branding being tactical and brand development more strategic. But both are essential in professional communications.

Where to find MST's brand distinction



Where to find evidence of distinction.
What does MST = ?

Brand Development Steps

1. Conduct brand discovery session to identify MST's why. Include representatives from the Board of Directors, staff, riders and strategic partners in a discovery session.
2. Develop a brand essence statement that incorporates MST's Unique Value Proposition and becomes a guide for communicating what MST is about.
3. Develop a meaningful tagline that distills MST's brand essence for use in promotions and communications.
4. Form a Momentum Group Committee that develops programs and initiatives to solidify and promote the brand internally and externally and tracks progress.
5. Develop and deploy compelling internal and external brand campaigns.

Timeline and Costs

Timeline: 12 weeks

- Budget for Steps 1-3: \$8,000
- Momentum Group Committee formation and stabilization: \$4,000
- Brand campaign concepts (1-3) \$4,000
- Brand campaign execution by current designer: \$TBD

2. Integrate Marketing and Communications

Integrate all marketing communications by systematically deploying initiatives across multiple communications and marketing channels to leverage resources and results.

Integration Benefit

Integrating marketing communications offers several benefits.

First, it will help MST's riders, strategic partners and employees better trust MST and its values through consistent messaging.

Second, it effectively extends limited resources (both human and budgetary).

Because MST's marketing and communications team is small and disciplined, it is already inclined towards an integrated marketing communications model. It is a discipline filter as much as anything else. With everything MST creates, ask these questions:

- ▶ Does it support our brand?
- ▶ Which channels will we deploy to support this?
- ▶ How can we leverage assets across audiences and channels?

Selected Tactics

1. Create awareness through community feedback campaigns. Sharing research is not only an awareness driver, it also amplifies thought leadership.
2. Enhanced Social Media:
 - ✓ Increase followers (and thereby engagement) to demonstrably communicate the value of MST transit and mobility services
 - ✓ Enhance and streamline content creation
 - ✓ Leverage Instagram
 - ✓ Use new Twitter account to expand thought leadership and influence
3. Use paid media in strategic places to enhance community awareness (i.e. Monterey County Weekly Back to School edition).
4. Expand media relations distribution effectiveness and build outreach tools.

Create awareness through community feedback

Annual or bi-annual ridership and community surveys provide valuable benchmark data. However, their 12- or 24-month cycle hampers the ability to collect data off cycle. This means MST is limited in its ability to generate rapid insights, e.g. response to a potential new advertising campaign. Current technology allows for the creation and maintenance of survey panels which can be used for quick-hit market insights.

In order to allow MST to gather information between the bi-annual community survey, MST could develop, or contract to have developed, panels for riders and community members to share structured and unstructured feedback. Sample topics include:

- Hospitality and retail industry workers on get-to-work information
- A/B testing of new promotional ideas
- Ranking of events and places that MST might consider for supplemental routes
- Awareness of, and degree of, alignment with political groups that have a transit interest

These panels can be leveraged for immediate tactical input as well as for contribution and validation of longer-term strategic operations. Data arising from these panels can be combined with other customer feedback mechanisms to provide a stream of ongoing insights.

Findings from this process need to be re-shared with the community leveraging multiple methods, e.g. social media, MST website, and videos with senior MST personnel addressing key points.

Social Media Analysis*

- Facebook followers outpace Twitter and Instagram combined (1,107 vs 621 (twitter) and 408 (Instagram)) in March 2019.
- MST averages 24 likes on Instagram posts and 14 reactions on Facebook.
- Facebook sees the greatest amount of outbound activity. FB categories that see the largest average reactions include: employee announcements (23); events (22); holiday announcements (23); job fair announcements (15).
- FB posts that have links average 18 click-throughs.
- The Twitter channel is mostly used to address route status and updates. A secondary Twitter account has recently been developed for communications of broader interest.
- SurveyMonkey is currently used on social media for sporadic community feedback (e.g. Line 23 changes). A more optimal approach would be to use rider/community panels supplemented with social media. Survey findings and action outcomes could then be reported via social media. Fun, quick quizzes can be created right within Facebook using its polling tool.

* Three Month Analysis: December 2018, Jan/Feb 2019; Does not include new twitter feed.

Social Media: Build Followers

Build Facebook/Instagram followers with the goal of hitting 5,000 followers by the summer of 2021 in order to increase reach and influence by:

- A. Inviting people who like a post to follow MST
- B. Creating paid campaigns (use A/B testing to maximize effectiveness)
- C. Cross promoting ridership opportunities with community and strategic partners
- D. Liking your partners' pages and sharing any relevant content
- E. Hashtag MST Instagram campaigns, projects and general posts

Social Media: Enhance Content Creation

1. Focus 40% to 50% of social media on People and Events, with click through capabilities where possible. Continue to respond to comments and messages. MST does a great job of this.
2. Use a dedicated tablet with inexpensive editing apps to quickly edit videos and photos on the fly. Upload to shared cloud storage for safekeeping.
3. Create fun-fact memes: (see Social Media Appendix)
 - A. Two (2) per month; these can be batch created using templates; perhaps feature employees to deliver these facts.
 - B. Key Dates: e.g. April 25th is 'Get on Board for Public Transit' day sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association
 - C. Organizational values
4. Add more video content, including live videos featuring:
 - a) Monthly riders feedback (Film Carl reading and responding); Pick just the two or three best/most interesting. (2 kudos; 1 problem solved.)
 - b) People's Choice: Employee of the Month: mini interview
 - c) Rider of the Month: prize is a free monthly pass
 - d) Partner Videos

Social Media: Enhance Content Creation

Continued from previous page...

- e) Special videos as resources allow:
 - i. Assistance dogs, kids, veterans, special events, “How to ride” video for MST and mobility, Safe Place.
 - ii. Anything with pets, people love animals and they get a lot of views
- 5. Promote survey findings and action outcomes; develop a template to facilitate this.
- 6. Sell Passes, especially when new routes are added
- 7. Boast about employees, accomplishments, community and strategic partners, passengers.
- 8. Media coverage and social kudos: Syndicate press releases post-distribution through social media channels using a different channel and headline/lead for each of the top three pickups. Provide context that shows why it matters.

Social Media: Enrich Instagram

Facebook and Twitter skew towards older demographics; Instagram targets a younger audience. More than 40 percent of Instagram users are between 16 and 24 years old. These audiences are prime targets to grow ridership and instill the benefits and value of using public transit.

1. Save the best quality photos for Instagram. Use strong images that support the MST brand and key messaging.
2. Campaigns featuring user generated content are especially effective on Instagram. Partner with local artists, influencers, and interesting locals who are active on Instagram and have them do a visual story take over about MST that targets key audiences and celebrates community.
3. Use Hashtags: Facebook hashtags never really caught on. But they are the best way to effectively search on Instagram.

Social Media: Tweet This

A higher Twitter follower count translates into more influence in your industry, including transit pundits, journalists and advocates. MST recently created a separate Twitter account for content beyond service alert notifications. The new account should be used to emphasize thought leadership, generate engagement and elevate awareness and understanding of public transit and MST's brand values.

Objective: 1,250 followers within 24 months

Key Tactics:

- Follow and engage with key politicians, public transit experts, analysts and journalists. Acknowledge and amplify their content when it fits into MST's strategic framework. +/- 45%
- Follow oppositional forces as an intelligence gathering tool and engage politely as appropriate. <5%
- Reuse, repurpose, and redistribute your MST's thought leadership content, and accomplishments. Tweet key insights during conferences. Engage thoughtfully. +/- 45%

Practical considerations:

- Create a profile that manages expectations as to what followers may expect on this feed.
- Use hashtags consistently and appropriately.

Boost Media Relations

MST should continue using traditional media relations tools to demonstrate innovation and leadership and showcase accomplishments. Distribution must be expanded to reach external industry influencers and position MST as an effective public transit authority. Leveraging tactics include:

- When possible, include images or infographics on press releases to illustrate story and improve pick up.
- Develop a boilerplate that summarizes MST—include hash tags and links to social media and websites—and place on bottom of every distributed release.
- Use a wire service to distribute those releases that demonstrate innovation and leadership within the industry. Average one (1) per quarter. Business Wire recommended; manage costs by using the California Circuit with free distribution to the following trades: Transport: Public Transport; This has the added benefit of improving SEO, enhancing credibility within the industry and attracting influencers.
- Syndicate press releases post-distribution through social media channels using a different channel and headline/lead for each of the top three pick ups.
- Create a downloadable interactive press kit that contains fact sheets, key initiatives with links to backgrounders, executive bios and link to a photo gallery. Photo gallery should contain images in resolutions suitable for web and print. Include social media links.

Paid Advertising

MST benefits from its location in an inexpensive paid media market. Paid advertising will be negotiated across integrated social/online and print buy outs. Radio buys should include online promotional consideration.

1. Campaigns:
 - a. “Real Time” print and radio
 - b. “Ride The 40's” Radio & Social Media
 - c. 2017 Monterey Jazz Festival Program
 - d. Quarterly “Employee of the month,” “People’s Choice,” and “Community Rider” print and social media
 - e. Brand campaign roll-out fall of 2019: print, radio and online
2. General Recommendation:
 - a. Ask for value-ad support

Budget: Integrated Marketing

Social media:

- Paid follower campaign per year: \$2,400
- User-generated content stipends: 4x a year @ \$2,000 each

Media Relations:

- Business Wire 4x per year: \$3,800
- Press kit development & design
 - Internal: \$0; External: \$1,900
- Photo gallery image prep (40-50 images)
 - Internal: \$0; External: \$900

Budget: Integrated Marketing

Paid Campaigns:

- “RealTime” print and radio (already allocated)
- “Ride the 40'S” Radio & Social Media (already allocated)
- 2019 Monterey Jazz Festival Program (already allocated)
- Quarterly “Employee of the Month,” “People’s Choice,” and “Community Rider” print and social media (\$3,200)
- Brand Campaign roll-out fall/winter of 2019: print, radio and online (\$25,000)

3. Expand Strategic Partnerships

Expand strategic partnerships that create synergy and generate new riders

Strategic Partnership Overview

Measurable Objective: Build 4 new strategic partnerships a year to augment current community relations program with the objective of increasing boardings.

Community building and partnerships are a clear strength of MST. MST has three assets which will take strategic partnership development to the next level while increasing community support:

- A board comprised of representatives from each city, who can facilitate agreements.
- Beronica Carriedo, Community Relations Coordinator, who is highly skilled at community building.
- Senior leaders who are innovative problem solvers.

Executive and senior leadership should join key regional boards and associations, particularly those with major employers in industries such as hospitality/tourism, education, chambers of commerce, agriculture*, and medical services.

By building these partnerships, new avenues for increasing ridership and bus advertising revenue, feedback mechanisms, and intersectional grant partners will unfold.

*Possible cannabis distribution

Community Partnership Tool Kit

Staff, with input from board representatives, will develop a collaboration program tool kit that can be deployed in a new shopping district or industry group. The toolkit should include:

- Project management checklists and contact profiles.
- A panel protocol for employers and employees to share structured and unstructured feedback.
- A collaborative workshop model (work with a professional facilitator to create this) to share research findings and develop programs such as shopping discounts for transit riders amongst retailers on relevant routes. Use Remix live to explore possibilities.
- A series of interview questions for key partners that will expedite development of press releases, articles, and social media posts.
- Templates for social media posts and press releases to communicate research findings.
- Create a Community Partnership Award that recognizes valuable contribution to public transit.

Strategic Partners: Tourism

The Monterey tourism and hospitality industry, although seasonal, offers significant opportunities for MST.

- Hospitality workers are low paid and could benefit from access to free/reduced transportation. They and their employers should be queried, preferably via panel to determine transportation needs, communication preferences, and opportunities. Outcomes should be shared via traditional and social media.
- Cruise ships have returned to the bay. Additional routes, timed with scheduled dockings, would increase MST boardings. Partner with the City of Monterey for non-summer, non-weekend service.
- MCCVB is focused on promoting better experiences for travelers. MST could be a part of their strategic focus, especially given its route offerings such as The Grapevine Express, Big Sur and the Monterey Trolley.
- A tourists-focused z-fold brochure is under development. It should be distributed to every hotel located along an MST route.

Strategic Partners: Commerce

Chambers of Commerce and retailers in malls and dense shopping corridors also offer unique opportunities to increase boardings.

- Like hospitality workers, retail workers are low paid and could benefit from access to free/reduced fare transportation. They and their employers should be queried to determine transportation needs, communication preferences, and opportunities. Outcomes should be shared via traditional and social media.
- MST provides a built-in delivery service of customers. Retailers might be able to provide shopping discounts for transit passholders on relevant routes.

Outreach Tactics Summary

- Identify and prioritize 4 new organizations for strategic partnerships; one per quarter. Start in August with Hartnell and Monterey Peninsula Colleges.
- Build an online community request form for use on social media and website
- Assess current MST participation with community groups and join new ones as needed.
- Create a collaborative partnership tool kit
- Create a bus cut out for community events
- Develop a coloring and activity book for community events
- Sell MST SWAG in online store on website
- Live feed events on Facebook

Budget: Strategic Partnerships

- Tool kit: mostly developed internally
- Collaborative meeting model (local consultant): \$2,500
- Research Panels 4x per year (local consultant): \$10,000
- Additional Membership fees: TBD
- Create a bus cut out for community events
- Develop a coloring and activity book for community events

4. Fortify Internal Communications

Reward and leverage employee service.

Internal Communication Initiatives

Brand reputation lives and dies through the grace of its employees. Internal communication is a critical function in keeping your brand promise and serving your customers. It provides a lens for decision making that empowers employees and allows the organization to remain in control of its message. In a crisis, internal communications rules by increasing transparency and limiting rumors.

Over the next year, MST will undertake the following internal communications initiatives:

1. Create a brand momentum committee to support brand development.
2. Develop a private Facebook group for MST Employees to facilitate communications and connection.
3. Develop a crisis communications plan with templates and practice its implementation.
4. Create three awards programs:
 - A. People's Choice Awards for passengers to recognize exceptional drivers
 - B. The Community Drive Award for drivers to recognize great passengers
 - C. Enhance current Employee of the Month program social media posts

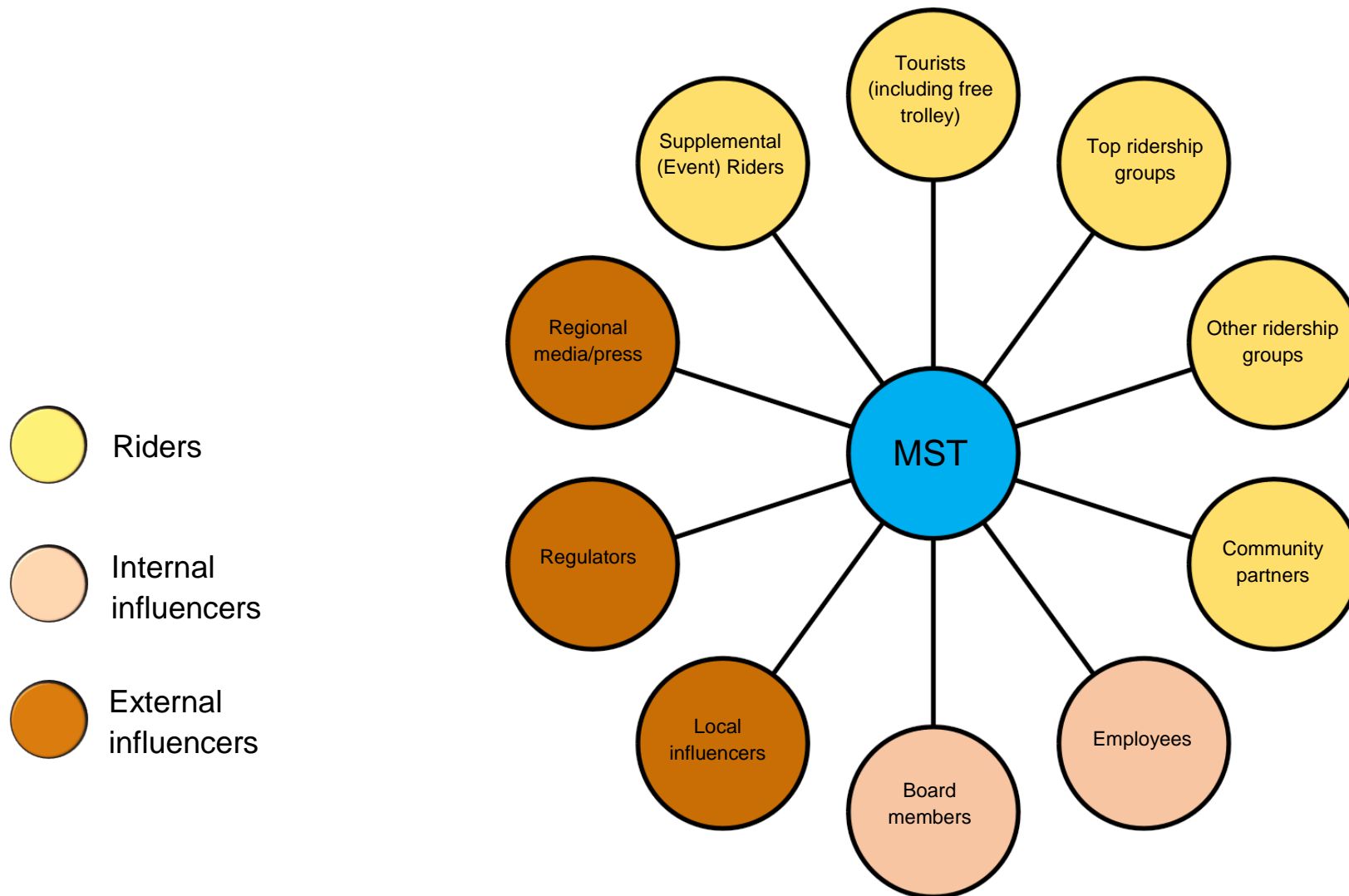
Budget: Internal Communications

- Brand momentum committee (see budget page 11) to support internal brand adoption
- Crisis communications plan with templates:
 - Internal: \$0; External: \$2,100
- Awards programs:
 - SWAG: \$800 (allocated out of existing budget expenditures)
 - People's Choice Awards for passengers to recognize exceptional drivers \$1,200 per year
 - The Community Drive Award for drivers to recognize great passengers: free monthly pass
 - A Community Service Award that recognize good work and innovation on behalf of the public transit: \$1,200 per year
 - Supporting paid advertising campaign

Touchpoints, Personas & Messaging

A look at internal and external touchpoints, messaging, personas and markets

Touchpoints



External Influencer Messaging

Possible Overarching Message: We are experts in providing and advocating for high-quality transit service within our community.

Benefit Messaging:

- Innovation: MST bucks public transit trends through innovative problem solving and collaborative community partnerships.
- An Effective Partner: We believe in creating win-win opportunities to better serve our community and industry.
- Sustainability: We develop and promote policies and practices that encourage environmental and fiscal sustainability.

Internal Influencer Messaging

Messaging will be refined following development of MST's brand essence statement.

Overarching Message: Our purpose is to advocate for and provide high-quality transit and mobility management services to serve our community.

Benefit Messaging:

- Innovation: MST bucks public transit trends through innovative problem solving and collaborative approaches.
- An ethos of service and accountability: frame this around MST values.
- Sustainability: We develop and promote policies and practices that encourage environmental and fiscal sustainability.

Rider Messaging

- Overarching Messaging: MST provides residents and visitors with high-quality transit service that is safe and reliable.
- Value messaging:
 - Reliability: You can rely on us to get you where you need to go. MST has an on-time record of 90%.
 - Safety: MST offers a safe ride by trained drivers.
 - Community Connection: Increase your social connections by riding MST.
When you ride, you're part of something bigger.
 - Cleanliness: You'll love the cleanliness of our vehicles.
 - Cost savings vs. private vehicle: A monthly pass costs less than a car payment. This means the gas, repairs and parking tickets are on us.
 - Environmental: Using MST reduces the number of vehicles on the road thereby improving air quality, alleviating traffic congestion, and noise. MST helps our community reduce energy consumption, greenhouse gases and other pollutants to keep Monterey visitors and residents healthy.

Survey: Riders express a generally positive onboard experience with safe driving, driver helpfulness and bus cleanliness scoring higher than other attributes.

Tourist Persona: The Garcias

- Juan (41) & Elena (39) and sons
- Married 15 years
- From Temecula
- Contractor and HR executive
- Income \$220,000+
- Hobbies/Interests: Real estate, family travel, outdoor adventures.
- Bilingual
- Progressive



Message to Juan & Elena: Take the MST trolley and enjoy more adventure time with your family. It's free, convenient and will get you everywhere you need to go while visiting Monterey.

Senior Persona: Mary Beth

- Age 83
- Retired Teacher
- Income \$32,000
- BA in Math
- Lives alone
- No longer drives; uses MST regularly for doctor's appointments, errands, and outings with her friends
- Remains an active volunteer



Message to Mary Beth: MST will help you make it to your destination. It's safe, affordable, and you will meet interesting people while you ride.

Free 40's Persona: Haydee

- Age 35
- Married with one son
- Housekeeper at a Monterey hotel
- Low income (< \$20,000)
- Spanish speaking
- Husband uses car
- Lives outside of Salinas



Message to Haydee: MST is reliable, safe and free. You can count on MST to get you to work and back without fail.

Student Persona: Dave

- Dave Middleton
- Age 21
- Studies Arabic at the Defense Language Institute
- From South Dakota
- Single
- Interests: basketball, hanging out with friends



Message to Dave: School or party, MST gets you there.

Research Findings

Based upon monthly operational reports 2016 through 2018

Total Ridership Summary

2015 – 4,334,994

2016 – 4,406,784

2017 – 4,395,081

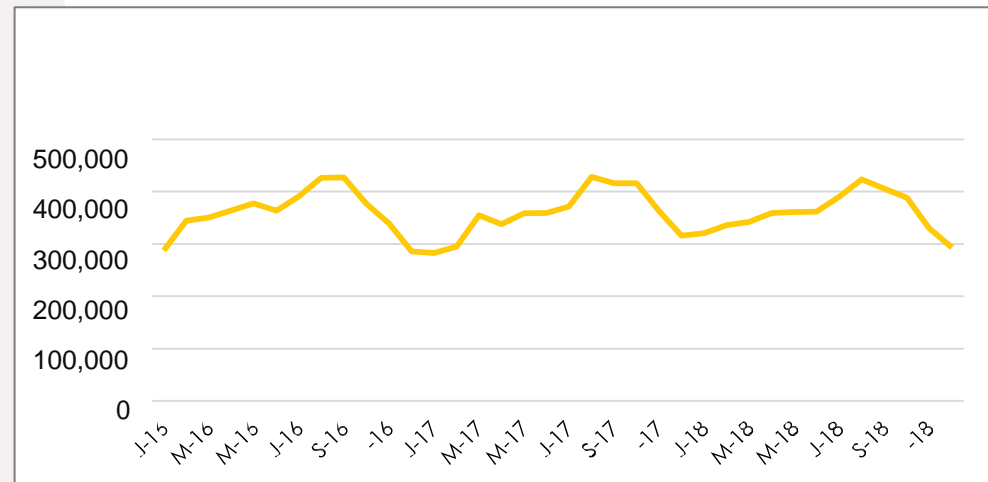
2018 – 4,635,954

From annual report includes all fixed-route, paratransit, on call, and taxi boardings.

Seasonal Patterns

- Monthly ridership shows a seasonal pattern with the six month period from May – October accounting for over half of the annual ridership.
- This aligns with tourist season and several major regional events including the Monterey Jazz Festival, Salinas Air Show, and the Monterey County Fair.
- Ridership peaks in August or September and troughs during the winter season, typically during the holiday month of December. Peak to trough declines were:
 - 34% (September 2016 to January 2017)
 - 26% (August 2017 to December 2017)
 - 31% (August 2018 to December 2018)

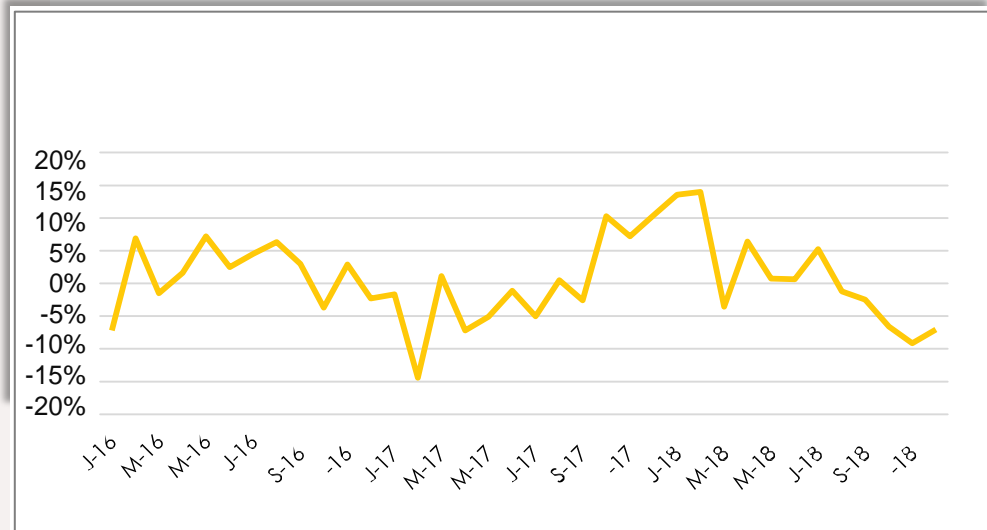
Monthly Ridership
(Jan 2016 – Dec 2018)



Seasonal Patterns

- The low points in the ridership cycle can be exacerbated by significant winter rains, as it was in 2017.
- To that point, inclement weather led to a 14.4% drop in ridership during February 2017, compared to February 2016. This was largely erased by a 14.0% gain in February 2018.
- Average monthly ridership by year for the three year period is:
 - ✓ 2016 - 361,228
 - ✓ 2017 - 358,277(-0.8%)
 - ✓ 2018 - 359,489 (+0.3%)
- Over the course of 36 months, year-over-year percentage change in ridership has fallen 17 times and increased 19.
- The period of August – December 2018 saw five straight months of ridership declines, compared to same month in the previous year. Prior to this run the longest period was four months (April – July 2017).

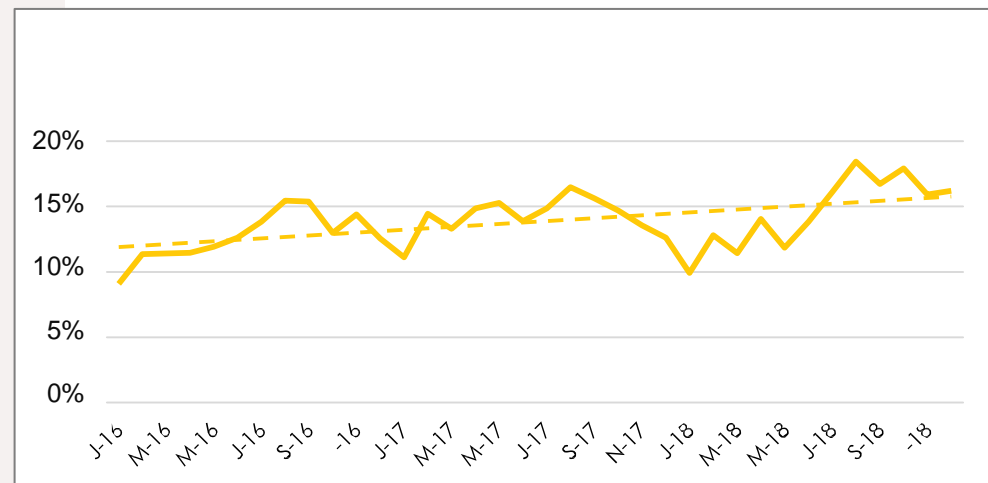
Monthly Ridership
(Year over Year % Change)



Delayed Points

- Riders have little tolerance for delays – the 2018 MST Ridership survey points out that nearly 60% of respondents indicated they would ride more often if “buses were on time more often”.
- The chart to the right shows an increasing trend in the percent of points that were delayed. The seasonality largely mirrors that of the ridership cycle (highest in late summer and lowest in mid-winter). The correlation between monthly ridership and the percent of delayed stops is a significant 0.56.

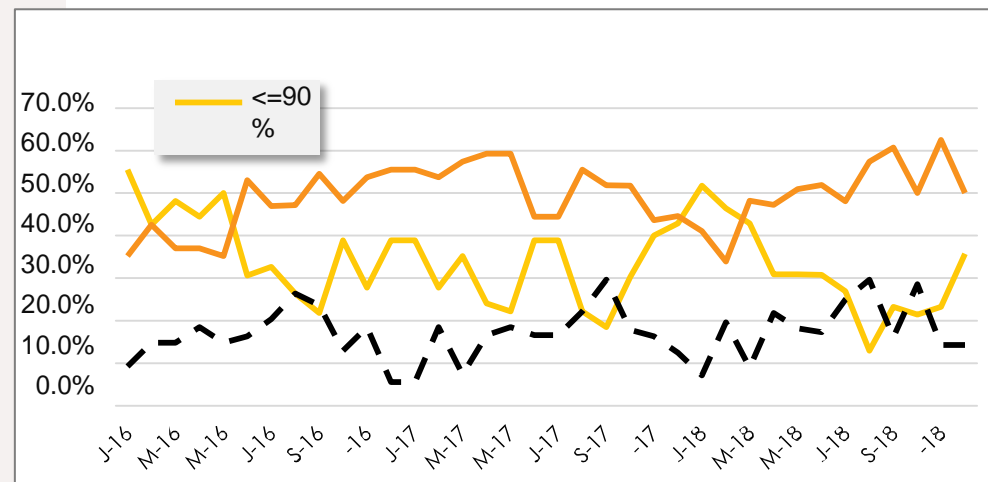
**Percent of Delayed Points
(Jan 2016 – Dec 2018)**



On-time

- From a route-level perspective, there is significant variation in the percent of timepoints that are considered “on-time”.
- MST has a minimum standard of 75% of the stops on any given route being on-time, and a target of 90% of stops being on-time.
- On average, over the 36 month study period, 34% of routes met or exceeded the 90% target. Just under half (49%) fell within the 75 – 89% range. One out of six routes (17%) failed to meet the minimum standard.
- The percentage of routes hitting the target of 90% has gone through roughly four phases:
 - Steady decline from January 2016 to September 2017
 - Upward shift from September 2017 to January 2018
 - Decline from January to August 2018
 - Slower increase from August to December 2018

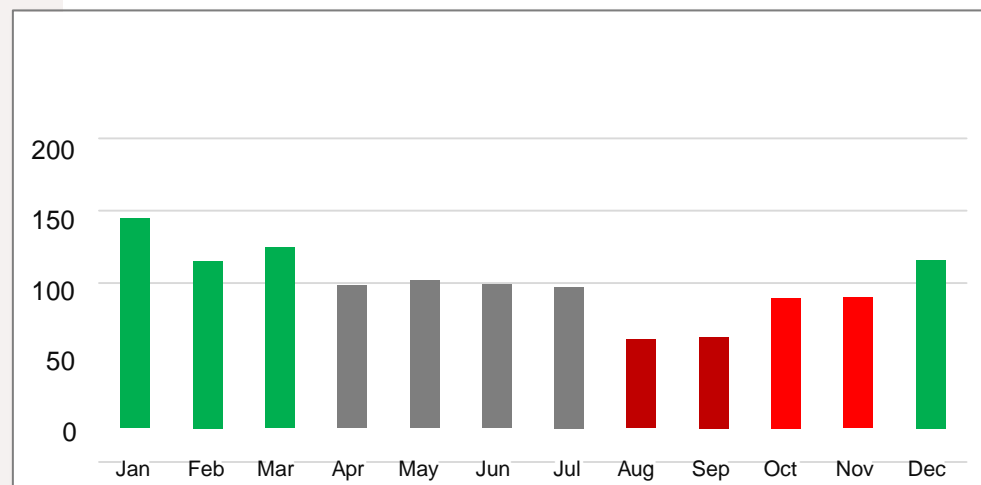
Percent On-Time Timepoints
(Jan 2016 – Dec 2018)



On-Time Adherence

- The height of the ridership season is when on-time adherence struggles. There is a strong negative correlation between ridership seasonality and percentage of routes at or exceeding 90% on-time target in any given month (-0.54).
- The monthly index for 90%+ on-time falls to around 60 in August and September – down from a peak index of 144 in January.

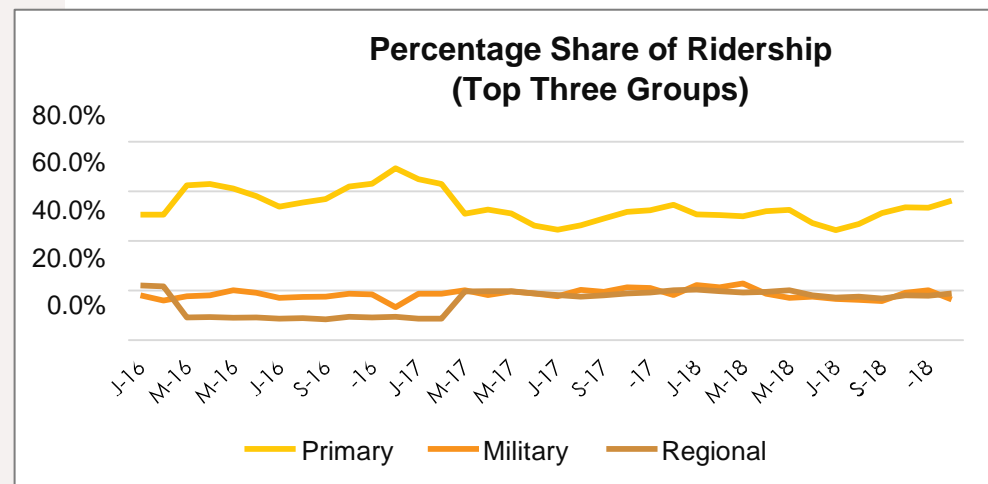
Monthly Index
Number of Routes at 90%+ On-Time



Top Three Ridership Groups

- Three ridership groups account for nearly 90% of MST ridership, with the majority coming from primary routes (54%), followed by military (19%) and regional (16%).
- From March 2016 to February 2017, the share garnered by routes in the primary category saw a shift up due to structural changes between regional and primary route designation.
- Primary routes include those serving CSU Monterey Bay which run in alignment with the academic calendar (off during June and July) thus leading to a decline in share.
- Military routes (serving the Presidio and Ft Hunter Liggett) show less variance, in terms of share of ridership, than those in the primary category.
- Since the adjustment (March 2016 to February 2017) regional routes have averaged 19% share of ridership

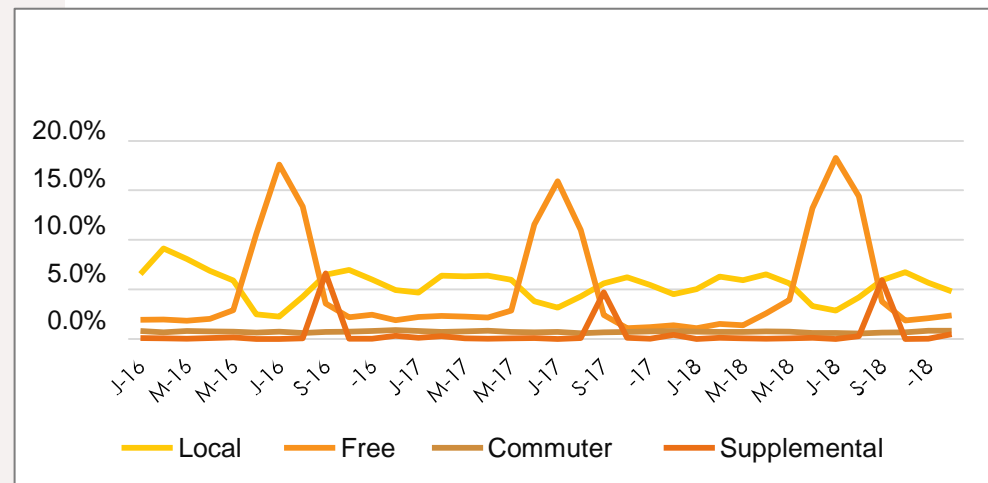
The top three account for nearly 90% of ridership



Bottom Four Routes

- The remaining four route groups account for approximately 12% of ridership, with the local and free route groups accounting for the majority.
- The share of ridership accounted for by local routes peaks in late autumn and reaches a minimum during summer.
- “Free” routes include the trolleys serving the aquarium and downtown areas. Their share rises with the summer sun and the tourists it brings to the region and reaches its maxima in July.
- “Supplemental” routes come to life in September and serve the Monterey Jazz Festival, the county fair, and the Salinas air show. On New Year’s Eve they serve the first night activities.
- The commuter lines (55 and 86) consistently average around 2,600 riders per month for a share of 0.7% per month.

Percentage Share of Ridership
(Bottom Four Groups)



SWOT

Strengths. Weaknesses. Opportunities. Threats.

Conducted January 2019

Strengths

- Friendly knowledgeable staff & customer service:
 - accurate to 75 – 80 % internal processes
 - accurate to 90% external
- Safe place training:
 - phase one done:
 - *Subsequent trainings before legislated push. Promote this.....not a one and done
- Community partnership: Beronica's why
- Name recognition: community knows MST (*they said brandnot*)
- **Strong Board:**
 - Mission formalized with board every three years
 - Engaged and collegial board respectful of staff
 - Advocates for customers
 - Resourceful" long term stability of \$\$
 - Resource management: funding, environment, congestion parking
- We ask the community for their opinions about MST and act on it
- Examples
 - Real time
 - Military
 - Seniors
 - Students
- Mobility services
- Great place to work and grow professionally
- Special events service:
 - More convenient, parking, promoted by MST, extension of the event and the experience
 - Buses are billboards for special events
 - Billboards aren't allowed on the freeways in this area so the buses become moving billboards
- It's inexpensive to do a media buy here because it's not a major market; \$15k buys a fully integrated TV campaign
- CEO reads all customers' comments (usually Fridays, notices outliers and patterns)
- Employee recognition program
 - Employee of the month
 - Annual employee of the year includes a newspaper ad
- Active on social media
- Lots of public information
- Rider's guide, brochure website, working on a z brochure for the hotels
- Great experiences are expected: challenge is that often the only place to go is down
- Community allies see MST as the Gold standard
- Current local political climate is supportive of MST
- Innovative
- Mobility service center, Jazz BRT ahead of its time, creative problem solving: bio fuel experiment
- Dependable: driver's mechanics utility staff
- This supports innovation by administrative team because it gives them space to experiment
- Opportunity for improvement
- Succession planning: people can't afford to move into the area, so they must figure out how to raise up staff

Weaknesses

- Monterey County not a major national market for selling ads
- Not enough time to better manage social media
- Lack of tools to edit manage social media images
- NO crisis communications plan in place
- Bus driver Shortage: Major weakness!
 - Work/union (60's era, senior drivers pick their routes) rules create an unattractive environment for drivers
- Fares are perceived as too costly, complicated.
- Miss our working folks
- Attend more chamber/local orgs/events, use resources.

Opportunities

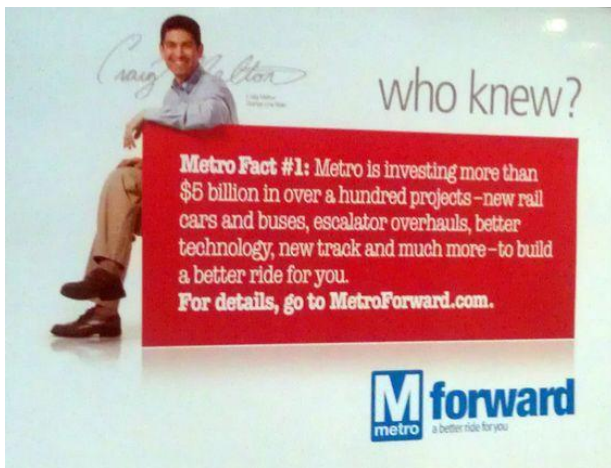
- Private facebook group for employees
- More social media boasting
- Safe place training ahead of regulations
- Customer Service:
 - Improve internal audit accuracy
 - Cultivate innovation in customer service
 - Recognize good work and innovation
- Autonomous buses
- Awards:
 - Recognize great passengers by drivers
 - People's choice awards for passengers to recognize drivers
- Survey hospitality workers on get to work information
- Create value proposition for MST: evidence of distinction
- Involvement /influence: shared mobility devices conversation at TAMC, city level
- Crisis communication plan and internal communications plan
- Use new mobility services center for enhanced travel training: schools, other non-Measure Q groups
- Promote rider/non rider surveys on social and report to community: create quick community pieces for references
- Revamp/simplify website
- Get more grants in order to underwrite free ride services (Note: 90% off didn't move the needle. Only free moves the needle)
- Use social (IG) to sell passes
- Kids and dogs sell! Video the experience from a service dogs perspective
- Tell us about your MST experience
- BRT Phase II: Surf
- Senior tsunami is here/coming
- Partnerships with malls, businesses, congested areas, work with chamber directors to figure out what their members businesses (and their employees') want
- Strategic Partnerships: Hospitality workers/Big employers/Cruise ships
- New planning tools: Remix/Transloc
- More express services/shorter travel time

Threats

- Overall wellbeing index has dropped with the current administration 2017 over 2016; people are grumpier. More critical, more fearful.
- Road construction impact bus service (no end in sight) this has stalled out their plans for the vine Line
- Lack of bus supporting infrastructure: BRT Bus on shoulder (which is allowed but the shoulders aren't in place), congestion
- Current national political climate: anti transit; Koch brothers well-financed assault on public transit
- # of people using transit to get to work has dropped POV/Uber/Lyft has increased
- Low income population is leaving area due to high cost of living
- Social media changing trends
- AB 65 allowed undocumented workers to get their driver's licenses
- High cost of living makes it difficult to recruit qualified employees
- Extensive background checks, rigorous testing/recruiting/drug tests turns off people (lax marijuana laws, who can pass them?)
- Potential for Uber/Lyft to steal riders
- RTA status is an influence
- Shared mobility devices: Lime/Bird

Appendix

Fun Fact Meme examples



The 4 P's of Marketing

