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Customer Attraction Playbook

Options and opportunities to rebuild confidence in public transport.

Synthesis of the UITPANZ Customer Experience Masterclass discussions and ideation session →

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Foreword

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Earlier in 2021, UITP Australia New Zealand and Accenture partnered to deliver a series of online events that took a deep dive into customer experience on public transport. We brought together public transport leaders and experts from a range of disciplines to determine how the industry can retain and attract passengers back post-pandemic.

This playbook provides a practical menu of options for what public transport authorities and operators can do to ensure public transport remains the backbone of how people move around our cities and regions, and is informed by the case studies, insights and ideas shared at those events.

It is an exciting time for the public transport sector to innovate and pivot to improve our networks, create more integrated journeys and a better overall customer experience. I look forward to seeing the improvements inspired by this playbook.

We closed out our Customer Experience Masterclass by facilitating a discussion amongst industry practitioners. This playbook documents the reflections and ideas generated by the participants.

Emerging themes

Trends and interesting spaces that
emerged throughout the event

Become more deliberate and commercially minded about attracting customers back.	Recognise what customers really value - offer clear value propositions.	Get the basics right – real-time info (arrivals, crowding etc), hygiene, safety.
Engage in dynamic feedback with customers - digital tools/app interactions.	Tie value propositions to passengers' daily lives.	Daily life – transport is a means to an end in supporting daily activities.
Explore the power of place making.	Provide equitable outcomes for individual preferences.	Data is critical.
End-to-end journey: partners together delivering seamless mobility.	Sustainable Development Goals – transport must support these.	Old rules may not apply post-covid.
Plan for agility/flexibility in future networks.	Enabling the 15-minute city.	Interaction in marketing: campaigns reassure people that public transport is a safe and sustainable option.
There is excess budget due to the covid delay, so we must think long term, invest money in awareness campaigns.	The 9 to 5 travel market appears to be shrinking. Need to pivot to new markets/trip purposes/travel times.	Adopt a 2-pronged approach to public campaigns. Reassure and remind people of the customer value proposition to generate demand.

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Traveller needs

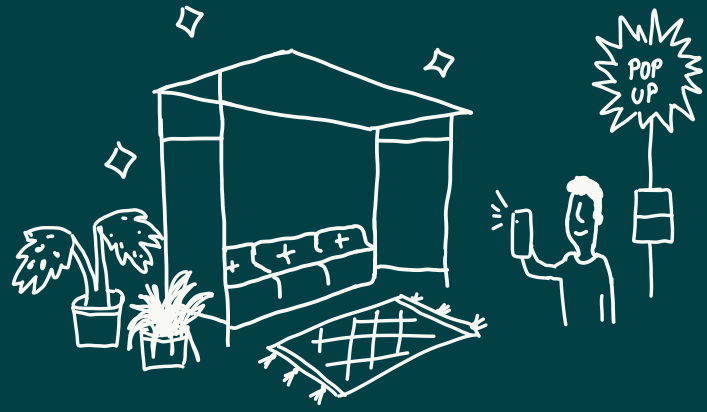What needs might a customer have at each moment along their journey?

Experience Principles

- **Reliable and consistent**
- **Environmental considerations**
- **Convenient and fits into my lifestyle**
- **Aware of all options**

- **Trust in the network, end-to-end**
- **Access to polite assistance**
- **Multi-modal journey availability**
- **Safe, accessible, seamless, easy and quick**

Trip planning

- Real-time and accurate information
- Real-time capacity to facilitate social distancing
- Disruption information before arrival at the station or stop
- Connection guaranteed
- Clear wayfinding and signage at the stop and onboard
- Journey planning tools that allow more variables or preferences

First mile

- E-mobility and other options to get me to my bus/train stop
- Safe environment (well lit, even paths, help when I need it)
- Ability to see when your service is arriving at key first mile points (park n ride, active transport infrastructure)
- Seamless connections
- Easier than picking up the car keys
- Weather dependant
- Easy access to stops and within walking distance

Access & payment

- Integrated single ticketing system
- Minimal physical contact
- Accept any type of digital payment
- Biometrics so it's quick and simple
- Rewards and discounts for loyalty
- Cost-effective options based on frequency
- Concession/student card
- Ability to see payment aggregation

Experience reflection

- Safe, frictionless and comfortable
- Got me where I needed to be, as planned
- Able to provide feedback with ease if I want to (on the spot, in my own time)
- Enjoyable experience when returning
- Rewarded for making the right choice
- Good experience whilst being unremarkable
- Notably better than driving (great service, I didn't have to drive)

Last mile

- Reliability and punctuality to ensure I can arrive at the destination as planned
- Connection to last mile mobility options (e-mobility/ bikes/ safe walkways)
- Infrastructure that supports safe connections during off-peak (lighting, pathways, staff presence)
- Options for the return journey

On ride/Off ride

- Accessible, frequently cleaned and comfortable
- Security - anti-social situations managed
- Assured to arrive at destination on time and able to meet connections
- Ability to be productive on the journey
- Able to adjust my trip plan easily whilst on the journey
- Intuitive and distance-legible wayfinding (physical and digital)

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Opportunity spaces

Pop-up partnerships

Collaborative partnerships to activate spaces, create surprising new experiences and incentivise travel.

Ideas

Activation of bus stops and station platforms, working with companies to make waiting for transport exciting and shareable on social media (immersive bus stop makeover).

Partner with private first and last mile scooter/micro-mobility providers to generate new incentives for those who use sustainable services.

Partner to develop a new loyalty program or connect to an existing program that rewards regular users and encourages repeat usage of public transport.

Marketing local sights, services and restaurants while providing wayfinding information.

Rebate/tax benefits for increased walking/cycling usage (e.g. reduced Medicare levy or private health premiums).

Digital services that customers find more valuable (news, streaming, audiobooks, learning programs).

Mindsets & preferences | Trip planning | First mile | Access & payment | On ride/ Off ride | Last mile | Experience reflection

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Opportunity spaces

Community spread
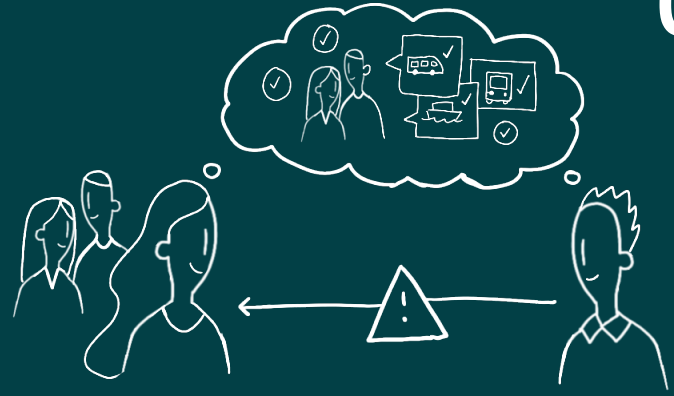
Effective engagement with community, councils and precinct owners to develop collective efforts with shared outcomes.

Ideas

Provide disruption information to local government for wider community distribution where customers live and interact (before arrival at the station or stop).

More customised support and targeted communications for recent migrants and other target groups that the more generic messaging won't always work for.

Partnerships with community groups to ascertain design of services and future infrastructure aligned with the needs of diverse customer groups.

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Opportunity spaces

Right on time information
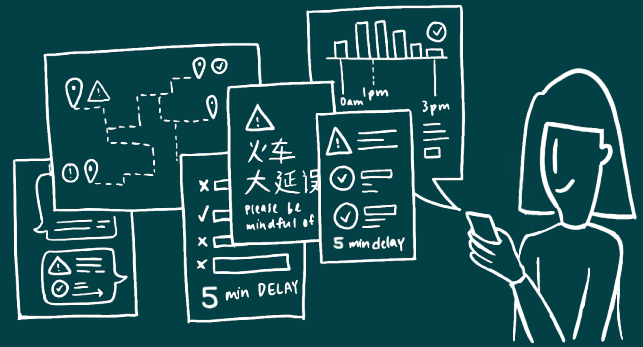
Provision of accurate and accessible service information that encompasses end-to-end multi-modal journeys, delivered exactly when customers need it.

Ideas

Updated wayfinding and physical timetables that reflect real-time data and are accessible at interchanges and on-route locations.

Multi-lingual, fully accessible information.

Providing customers with tools to see real-time information and understand if any incidents are impacting the network.

Demand-responsive services that seamlessly relay route or time-based changes to customers.

Predict passenger capacity levels and recommend the best routes and times to travel.

Grant customers the ability to interact 'live' with operator chatbots for personalised trip information and support.

Mindsets & preferences

Trip planning

First mile

Access & payment

On ride/ Off ride

Last mile

Experience reflection

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Opportunity spaces

Mobility from door to door

To build a greater sense of security and certainty, travellers require greater visibility of options, the ability to pre-book, and access to new first and last mile and micro-mobility services.

Ideas

Digital services that enable visibility and booking capability for micro-mobility and park and ride options.

Closer coordination with bike and scooter share operators to distribute their vehicles at public transport network access points and local community hubs.

Policy change to encourage greater adoption of sustainable services and active transport options.

Provide customer service staff at busier areas and on-trip information to help direct people to different micro-mobility options.

Community-based rideshare services for young people (certified working with children) to help busy parents transport their kids home.

Offer subsidies to operators for smaller journeys.

Mindsets & preferences | Trip planning | First mile | Access & payment | On ride/ Off ride | Last mile | Experience reflection

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Opportunity spaces

Natural payments

Enhanced digital experiences and inclusive options which allow customers to plan and pay in a manner that best suits their needs and patterns of behaviour.

Ideas

Pre-payment and subscription options for regular travellers, built around flexibility. Ability to pause or update time-based ticketing to address uncertainty and hesitancy.

Create easy integrations into multiple ticketing types (one card for all - travel, events, food purchases) - can be a mobile option.

Simplify ticketing model that grants seamless payment and the option to bundle.

Remove penalties for using cash for vulnerable groups unable to transition to cashless payment.

Biometrics, computer vision and deep learning algorithms to remove the payment process entirely through digital wallets and innovative payment solutions.

Equitable Mobility as a Service (MaaS) offerings to create a universal basic right to access public transport.

Mindsets & preferences | Trip planning | First mile | **Access & payment** | On ride/ Off ride | Last mile | Experience reflection

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Opportunity spaces

5 star customer service

Consistent customer service across all modes, supporting frontline staff to address issues and tools to capture traveller feedback.

Ideas

Recognise and reward customer-facing service workers for providing real service – connecting with customers as real people to support their journeys.

Create multisensory experiences including sound, visual and textural media to create vibrant and easily accessible service offerings.

Providing customer service training to drivers and the tools for all customer service staff to provide real-time feedback to supplement data-driven responses.

Rating systems through transport planning apps with direct sharing of data with operators and agencies to better understand customer needs.

Thumbs up/down or QR code scanning for real-time feedback at end of journey tap-off to gauge any key issues with the experience.

Implementing customer feedback changes quickly and communicating improvements to the public to build a sense of trust within the community.

Mindsets & preferences | Trip planning | First mile | Access & payment | On ride/ Off ride | Last mile | Experience reflection

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Opportunity spaces

Safety and sanitisation made visible
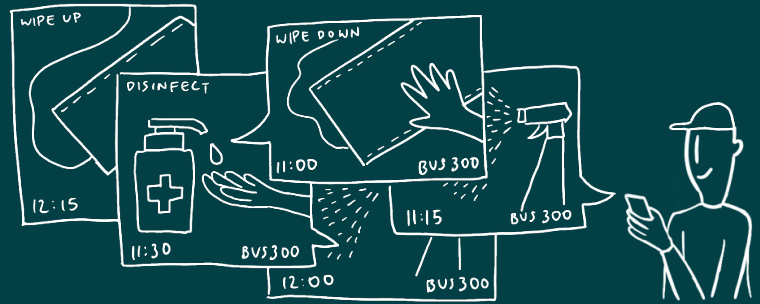
Maintain the frequency of extra cleaning procedures that the public can see and take further steps to approach safety concerns beyond the pandemic.

Ideas

Cleaning efforts should be made visible, with staff operating during service periods to help travellers feel comfortable and safe.

Visible records of when spaces were last cleaned, made accessible through customer-facing apps, onboard, or at the stations and stops.

Journey sharing service to enable the sharing of location with loved ones until travellers are safe at home.

Safe zones with extra surveillance, consistent lighting and the ability to easily connect to drivers or staff before incidents occur.

Mindsets & preferences | Trip planning | First mile | Access & payment | On ride/ Off ride | Last mile | Experience reflection

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Opportunity spaces

Capitalising on the zero emissions transition

The zero emissions transition presents an opportunity to redefine the fleet experience for travellers whilst offering consistent and efficient operations.

Ideas

Consistent minimum tech standards/ guidelines on all new asset purchases or builds (e.g. capacity monitors).

Opportunity to co-design desired on board experience with operator partners and build into contract KPIs.

Identify ways to reduce cost to serve and increase reliability for customers (e.g. standardised maintenance practices).

Reduce ticketing system hardware that requires maintenance and upkeep.

Ease of training for drivers and customer service staff.

Innovating on board systems for driver performance/trip comfort.

Addressing accessibility issues between stations/stops and vehicles: Soundsets at stations, lift doors, gateline widegates, ticket machines, visually-impaired audible guides.

Standardised cleaning practices across fleets may offer customers a greater sense of comfort and peace of mind.

Mindsets & preferences | Trip planning | First mile | Access & payment | On ride/ Off ride | Last mile | Experience reflection

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- A two-day Customer Experience Masterclass on the topic of Bringing Passengers Back to Public Transport

- A webinar on the topic of Customer Retention and Loyalty – Attracting Customers Back.

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Those events and this report were made possible through the hard work of our dedicated teams:

About the authors

International Association of Public Transport Australia/New Zealand (UITPANZ)

The International Association of Public Transport (UITP) is a passionate champion of sustainable urban mobility and is the only worldwide network to bring together all public transport stakeholders and all sustainable transport modes. We have 1,800 member companies from 100 countries. Our members are public transport authorities and operators, policy decision-makers, research institutes and the public transport supply and service industry.

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