Tempe Revs Up A New Marketing Campaign

Introducing: “tim” and “bolt”
When the Tempe transportation commission, and consultant Thinking Caps, joined city staff to develop a marketing theme for the new service, they determined that being friendly, approachable, and progressive were the most important messages. That’s where “tim” and “bolt” were conceived.

JumpStart to Get it Going
In September 1996, the city of Tempe’s half-cent sales tax for transit was approved by voters. Transit improvements were scheduled for January 1997, although city staff decided to make needed improvements immediately. These improvements were called “JumpStart.” Due to popular demand, the service enhancements included Sunday service and late evening service.

One of Tempe’s new advertisements promoting transit.

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Voters Bet on the LOTTERY

Proposition 204, which appears on this November’s general election ballot, asks Arizona voters if they wish to continue the current state lottery system. A “yes” vote would continue the lottery until July 1, 2008; a “no” vote would end it July 1, 1999. This vote also affects the national Powerball game which is part of Arizona’s lottery system.

In 1993, Arizona voters created the state lottery that not only funds a lot of personal spending dreams but also funds many statewide programs such as the Local Transportation Assistance Funds (LTAF) through revenue generated from ticket sales. Arizona cities and towns receive $223 million a year from LTAF—in Maricopa County the figure is $17 million. All RPTA member cities and towns over 60,000 in population are required by law to use some, or all of their lottery revenue for transit. Many cities and towns depend heavily on LTAF funding to maintain their share of regional or transit service. Lottery revenue also funds programs such as the Heritage Fund, which...

The Arizona Lottery Office

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Creative Developments in the Works

This summer, Phoenix ad agency mmcR has been hired to develop a comprehensive plan to promote these exciting new services. Emphasis was placed on non-traditional advertising venues in order to best reach target audiences and provide the best use of a limited budget.

Newspaper and radio ads, outdoor posters, and camera slides are being purchased. An outdoor billboard is being built near Arizona Mills mall aimed to reach the driving public. Examples of their creative work include a printed advertisement offering a play on words with the headline “Get Your Kicks on Route 66, 38, and 77” and a radio spot featuring a humorous spoof on a luxury car.

Driving the point home, the City of Tempe is not stopping short of promises to make bus service better. Whether it’s the “Tim” or “Dial” or “FLASH” option, taking the bus in Tempe can be FUN!
Transit Gets Smarter!

Some of the Valley's busiest travel corridors are getting smarter, thanks to a real-time traveler information system being implemented by ADOT's AzTech program.

By late October, eight corridors will be electronically managed with Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technology to reduce rush hour congestion and delays. "Smart" signs will warn drivers of accidents and suggest alternate routes, while traffic lights will be coordinated to reduce vehicle stops. Monitoring cameras and sensors will alert police to potential hazards and road delays.

Behind the scenes, the AzTech program will also be working to make transit more efficient by setting new standards for on-time performance. A computer-aided dispatch and automatic vehicle location system will efficiently manage 85 to 90 percent of equipped buses beginning October 30.

Planning Transit for the 21st Century

Although it's not been updated since 2004, the next issue of the Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP) is about to hit the desks of transportation officials and community leaders all over the Valley. The report is a compendium of local transit plans from RTA member cities along with local transit planning initiatives for the area. This cooperative effort between RTA and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) provides a long-term look at transit and the goals for a more efficient transportation system.

Drafts will be presented at future public meetings for comment. At the conclusion of this process, the final draft will be presented to the Maricopa Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC) and the State Transportation Board to solicit their input and support.

To receive a final copy of the LRTP, contact RTA at 262-7842.
Why Telecommuting Is Good Business Sense

Motorola Shares Their Success Story

Can a telecommuting program at your company make a measurable difference? Ask Jay Tyson, Senior Program Manager at Motorola’s Chandler site. When they began their telecommuting program, they saw a 12 percent increase in productivity among those who telecommute. When translated to dollar amounts the added value returned per user amounted to $1000 per year.

“In the first year, the return on more than the investment, and the user can generate a 120 percent ROI (return on investment),” says Tyson. In subsequent years, the return average $1700 annually against yearly costs $600 per telecommuter according to Tyson.

“Analysts see that as a 500 percent return on our investment. We could do as well on our personal bank accounts!”

Motorola sets up telecommuters according to their technical needs. It includes an ISDN Terminal Adapter, used X-terminal, PC LAN card, installation and 12 months of ISDN, shared costs of office ISDN lines and ISDN server, and allowances for long distance.

For additional information on how Motorola has set up their program, contact Jay Tyson at 555-5600 or e-mail at ejt220@email.example.com.

Call Center Proves Home-based Employees Work

American West Vacations’ (AWV) telecommuting program has taken off over the past few years. Manager of call centers may find it hard to believe they can keep their employees at home, but AWV has found the formula to be a successful business strategy.

“In the call center industry, it is typical to have a 35 percent attrition rate, but among our agents who work from home, the attrition rate is around four percent,” says Bill Reed, Manager of Operations at the Tempe-based American West Vacations.

In 1995, they began a pilot telecommuting program with 10 call center agents working from home part time with used equipment. Now they have over 100 agents working from home full time. “A majority of our clients are travel agents, and they actually prefer talking with the agents who are working from home,” says Reed. The telecommuting agents have a quieter and less distracting environment and are usually more relaxed when helping their customers.

“We estimate that our telecommuters are 10 percent more productive than those working in the office, so we know how well it works for our organization and for our customers,” says Reed.

To contact Bill Reed at American West Vacations, call 603-3207, or e-mail him at breed@goodnet.com.

“Fall” Brings More Than Cooler Weather

The crisp, cool days of fall are upon us, and that means kids are back in school, football is flying through the air, and no more reruns on TV. The change of season also brings an unwanted visitor back to the Valley. Our cool fall and winter temperatures can create a layer of air known as an inversion, which acts like a blanket over the Valley. This covering traps carbon monoxide and particulate causing serious health and environmental problems.

To help combat this unwelcome winter visitor, the Clean Air Campaign will be working with major Valley employers to encourage their employees to use an alternative mode when commuting. Beginning in mid-October, the message “Together, We Can Make A Difference,” will be featured in radio spots, posters, and on bus shelters.

To encourage the formation of carpools and vanpools, Valley Metro will be sponsoring the RideShare Va-Drive.

Commuters who fill out a ride-share application between November 1998 and February 1999 will be eligible to win cash and prizes.

For more information on the RideShare Va-Drive, refer to our website at www.valleymetro.maricopa.gov or call 258-RIDE.
Scottsdale Mayor Welcomes Car Sharing Concept

Although we are an "auto-indulgent" society, actual car use is less than one hour per day with most of those only carrying one person. Therefore, it makes sense to be more economical with vehicle utilization. Car sharing, a new concept in mobility and travel, allows drivers to exercise greater efficiency with car usage.

On Friday, August 29, the RPTA and the city of Scottsdale hosted a meeting at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library to introduce the concept of car sharing. Special guest Conrad Wagner of Switzerland's Mobility Car Sharing, presented information about the different applications that are currently being used both in the U.S. and abroad. Mayor Sam Campana finds the idea quite intriguing and believes it is something to take seriously.

"Mr. Wagner's presence today will help serve as a catalyst for us to look at cost-effective choices for our transportation needs," said Mayor Campana, who also represents Scottsdale on the RPTA Board of Directors. She stated that it is important to consider the opportunity to incorporate car sharing into our travel needs and to introduce Wagner to the audience of local transportation officials.

Commissioned in Europe this idea has traveled to certain areas of the U.S. such as Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco. Our sharing is a subscription method of accessing a vehicle from a neighborhood location. The business end of our sharing is development through organized private or public partnerships involving one of the following: large employers, transit operators, neighborhood groups, or a car sharing business.

Wagner explained that typically cars can be accessed in one to three minutes and the best usage would be for two days or less. Otherwise, it may be more cost-effective to rent a car. Usually, cars are reserved by the hours for those who don't necessarily want the expense of owning a car or want to eliminate having a second car.

"We consider car sharing an unadulterated form," said Wagner. "You also have access to a variety of cars, for the different needs you may have. The basic

The car sharing partnership is an excellent complement to the range of transportation choices, and will make a real difference to the people who will live there," states Margaret Van Vliet of the
Residents Give Opinions on Travel

Earlier this year WestGroup Market Research conducted a telephone survey to assess resident attitudes and measure driving and trip reduction behavior in Maricopa County. In the premier issue of Destinations we gave you a brief glimpse of the findings; here are additional results of the survey.

Using Alternate Modes On The Rise

- The percent of those who exclusively use an alternate mode (i.e. carpool, bus, bike, or walk) to commute increased from 11% in 1995 to 14% in 1998.
- Those using an alternate mode at least one day a week or more since 1995 by 2.5%.
- Conversely, those who only drive alone decreased from 74% in 1993 to 68% in 1998.
- In the past year alone, there was an estimated 60,000 new alternate mode users representing 4.7% of the new estimated number of new commuters (~4,000) in the Valley over the past year.

Defining Carpools

- 72% of carpoolers have two or more people.
- Most carpoolers travel with a co-occupant/traveler (88%) or family member (42%)

Future Moves for Improved Ridesharing

- One-third of employed residents feel that they have the type of job that would be suitable for telecommuting.
- Currently, 58% of Valley residents have personal computers at home with 35% having Internet access.
- The top two suggested changes to encourage alternate modes range among commuters who currently drive alone are:
  1. Improving the transit system (27%)
  2. Finding someone to carpool with (20%)

Credits

Observations are available online at http://www.valleympire.gov. If you know of anyone who might be interested in receiving Destinations in either format, please call 602-258-7422. Destinations is the official newsletter of the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) and is published with a circulation of approximately 9,000 copies. We welcome your letters, comments and suggestions.

The RPTA is a political subdivision of Maricopa County created by a member board of elected officials, and was created by County in 1986 with the passage of Proposition 200. Members are open to all municipalities in Maricopa County and the County government.

The mission of RPTA is to promote the social and economic well being of the community through efficient and effective regional transit systems and services, and significant component of the transportation network.

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