RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title   Upper deck occupancy (route 59 bus)

Objective   How far does the introduction of new upper deck indicator technology on
buses encourage improved utilisation of space on the whole bus at peak
travel times?

Date   18/12/2015   **Agency**   2CV

Methodology **Quant**: Five minute intercept interviews on board route 59 bus. 3 screen
conditions (CCTV, text only, and text and diagram). c.100 interviews per
screen type

Abstract
Of 3 screen conditions tested, the 'diagram and text' screen has the greatest potential to influence behaviour and encourage customers to make use of available space on the upper deck. However, this screen has lower awareness*, potentially because it appears more technical and so is ignored by customers. More could be done to signpost and explain the screen to customers, as well as potential to improve the look of the screens.

Key findings
Customers who are currently staying downstairs have a preference for this area (it is closer to the doors, they don't like taking the stairs) and so it is potentially more difficult to change their seating behaviour. There is a cohort of customers who do stay downstairs out of habit (almost a fifth), and these customers are the key audience for the screen technology. However, these customers are more likely to be regular bus users, and so these habits may be engrained. The screens must become a lever for change among these customers.

Spontaneous and prompted awareness of the 'text' screen is higher than that for the 'diagram and text' screen. However, we see a greater impact of the 'diagram and text' screen, with higher scores across the TfL reputation metrics, and momentum scores. This is particularly true among those who are spontaneously aware of this screen type. More could be done to signpost the screen for customers to help them become familiar with the screen format - awareness of the 'diagram and text' screen type is currently lower than for 'text', perhaps because it appears technical and is ignored.

Comprehension of the screen types is generally good, although we see customers are more likely to rate the 'diagram and text' screen as confusing, and say they would like an introduction to the screen technology as it is not initially straightforward to understand. This could be achieved with sign-posting and more information on both decks. There is also comment that the look-and-feel of the screen could be improved –e.g. colour scheme.

Whilst this screen type is initially slightly more confusing, impact on customer behaviour is likely to be greatest for the 'diagram and text' screen - customers claim to be more likely to look out for this screen than the 'text' screen, and be more likely to go upstairs if it indicated seating was available. CCTV also outperforms the 'text' screen; customers want to actually see which seat is available, not just the number of seats.

*All 3 screen types were introduced onto Route 59 at a similar time.

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