

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Digital Screen Evaluation Research		
Objective	To evaluate the effectiveness of new format digital screens displaying bus arrival information and how well they are understood by customers		
Date	01/05/2013	Agency	2CV
Methodology	4 x intercept sessions at four pilot locations in London <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gracefield Gardens Health & Leisure Centre, Streatham• Redbridge College, Romford• Oaks Park High School, Newbury Park• Loxford School of Science & Technology, Ilford		

Abstract

The Technical Services Group has developed new format digital screens designed to communicate Bus arrivals information. In advance of rolling the screens out, TfL wanted to explore how customers responded to and navigated the screens and information. Customers generally responded positively to the screens which deliver against their information needs. The screens work well to inform on local area bus arrivals and, critically, the screen format allows for information to be accessed and consumed easily and quickly. If rolled out, the screens are likely to have a positive impact on key reputational drivers (*What TfL stand for; Experience; Progress & Innovation*). While the screens are well received, there are elements of the design and format that lack clarity and can impact negatively on engagement and propensity to use. These elements will need to be resolved to ensure greater customer engagement.

Key findings

The concept of the screens is well received by customers. The screens are regarded as an additional source of helpful information that can help inform travel decisions. Real Time Information (RTI) delivered via a screen format allows for quick and easy access and consumption, which is an important element in driving engagement. On using the screens, customers are broadly confident that they can make informed journey decisions.

- Layout works to inform about bus arrivals in the local area
- The amount of information on screen is considered right and
- The maps are essential in orienting people

In terms of layout and design, the format of the screen invites reading; however, there are some issues that can impact on comprehension and propensity to engage:

- Recessive title (and provenance) – can lack relevance
 - Increasing TfL provenance could increase relevance
- Font size not indicative of information hierarchy
 - Making the stop names slightly larger would help draw attention to most critical detail
- No overt CTA / reason to engage
- Frequency of service updates distracting and boxes can obstruct critical detail
- Some complaints on the size of text and map detail
 - Customers need to be quite close to interrogate detail; this is not always practical
 - Some maps included additional unnamed stops (presented as unmarked roundels) in the area unconnected to the RTI → can confuse in terms of identifying correct stop

In addition, there are other contextual factors can also impact on screen's perceived usefulness

- Positioning of screen can impact on whether details is interrogated
 - Where screens are harder to access, customers tend not to notice the information
- Screen set-up in individual organisations can effect how information is displayed
 - Where TfL info competes for 'screen time' with other information, bus arrival detail can be overlooked
 - How individual organisation format the screens can impact on how information is displayed

There is an opportunity for the Technical Services Group to offer 'best practice' protocols commissioning organisations that could help resolve these issues, including advise on how to optimise format depending on:

- Digital signage software
- Screen size / resolution
- Where best to position screens to ensure engagement

The nature of the organisation and the audiences that populate them can also be a significant factor in the screens' perceived usefulness. Based on this research, the screens are more appreciated by customers unfamiliar with the locale and associated bus routes. Students at educational organisations are making familiar journeys frequently, and while they appreciate the RTI, feel that the screens provide softer benefits. In terms of potential organisations to target for roll-out, it would appear that organisations visited by customers unfamiliar with the local area would provide the best opportunities.

Job number:12291