Why Transit Agencies Need the Public to Take Ownership of the Transit Experience

2:00-2:30pm ET

Speaker: Saba Long
Moderator: Alice Grossman, Ph.D.
Why Transit Agencies Need the Public to Take Ownership of the Transit Experience

Saba Long
Founder, Obelisk Strategies
Board member, MARTA Army

@sabalong
@MARTAarmy
martaarmy.org
History of MARTA Army

01 Born Out of TransportationCamp South
Problem: How to make MARTA cool?

02 Empowered External Champions
The public is already having these conversations. Identify who wants to be at the table.

03 Autonomy -> Innovation
MARTA recognized it would need to give the Army space to operate. Internal advocates built synergetic relationship.
Problem: Thousands of bus stops lack route and schedule information.

Solution: Design a simple-to-understand route schedule. Ask the public to adopt the bus stop(s) in their neighborhood.
Bus Stop Census

Problem: The current bus stop standard is not adequate for current and potential transit customers.

Solution: Catalogue 2,500 bus stops. Share data with MARTA and local transportation + public works departments.
Operation Feed-An-Operator

- Response to support furloughed transit workers
- Free restaurant-quality meals
- Partnership with World Central Kitchen
- From confirmation to go: two days

14,100 meals
Masks-4-MARTA

Launching 07.13.20

MARTA-led
Volunteer-supported

Free mask distribution across the system
Other Operations

01 MobileYouth Atlanta
The purpose of MY ATL is to better understand how families, children and young adults currently use MARTA and how their experience can be improved in the future.

02 MARTA Kudos
A "gala" to award and highlight frontline MARTA staff who go above and beyond. All submissions are received from customers.

03 MARTA Army Book Club
The Army convenes the public to read transit-oriented books and discuss the topics relative to the local transit experience.
The MARTA Army has helped people understand “that it’s your MARTA. The agency can only do so much, and you have to jump in and help make the system what you want it to be.”

Dr. Kari Watkins
Call to Action

AGENCIES

- Invite public engagement
- Autonomy is key
- Remember the customer

OTHERS

- Build a big table
- Iterate, iterate, iterate
- Quick wins
Q&A Session
What are your questions?
Thanks for attending!

Continue the conversation:
@sabalong
@MARTAarmy
martaarmy.org