

## The Advantages of Transit Advertising

Want to keep your business on the move? Try advertising on buses and in transit stations.

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Where do you advertise when you want to reach everybody? Transit advertising--placement of [print ads](#) on buses and other vehicles and in bus shelters and train stations--is an important medium for reaching an audience of all ages, backgrounds and incomes. You are not just addressing riders with these "moving billboards." You are reaching families and professionals in their vehicles, students shopping or right on campus, and tourists finding their way around town.

Why use transit [advertising](#)?

- You can't zap it.
- You can't ignore it.
- It can't be turned off like television.
- It reaches drivers and passengers no matter what radio stations they're listening to.
- The large, colorful, innovative designs demand attention.
- You have exclusivity in your space.
- It delivers a varied audience.
- It offers flexibility of ad size and location.

At one time, advertisers tended to shy away from internal transit advertising because of the perception of who the bus rider might be. Was the desired audience the person who could not afford a car? Today, concern for the environment and the popularity of programs such as Park-and-Ride have caused a wide range of [business](#) professionals, teachers, [college students](#), and many other types of workers to leave their vehicles in mall parking lots and ride the bus to and from their jobs. It saves them the often high cost of parking and the wear-and-tear on their cars and provides them the opportunity to review material for a morning meeting, study, or just relax and gather their thoughts for the busy day ahead. The cards displayed inside the bus reach passengers who spend an average of 30-40 minutes on the bus . . . and your ad is there for them to read the whole time.

Not only can you reach some very upscale customers on the inside of the bus, but you can also reach a large variety of people by advertising on the more traditional exterior signs. Available in various shapes and sizes, exterior bus signs display advertising messages to thousands of people in cars as well as pedestrians. Buses travel through cities and outlying suburban areas, to shopping malls, universities, business districts, amusement centers, supermarkets, theaters and convention sites. Local customers as well as visitors to your area will be exposed to your large moving messages.

### Types of Advertising

*King and queen signs* are located on the sides of transit vehicles. They are the largest of the signs and are attached to the bus with aluminum frames.

*Tail signs* are located on the rear of transit vehicles. If you've ever been stuck behind a bus at a traffic light or in a traffic jam, you know what the back of that bus says by the time you start moving again.

*Interior cards* are smaller and are seen only by the riders. They line the tops of the bus windows and include a sign located on the divider behind the bus driver (behind the driver sign). Some buses are assigned to school and college routes, so ask your transit company if you can put your signs in those particular buses to reach that younger audience.

You can buy all of the signs--inside and out--on one vehicle for tremendous impact. These "super-buses" or "mega-buses" can be fun buses to charter for special events.

In the last few years it has become more popular than ever in certain cities to "wrap" an entire bus with the theme of a company, a product, a museum, even camouflage wrap for an Army recruiting campaign. If it isn't all the rage in your city yet, it's coming--so don't be afraid to be the first to wrap a bus! These giant moving advertisements are impossible to miss and are a lot of fun to look at. A bus wrap is an expensive proposition and you will generally be required to sign a contract

that will keep you paying rent on your bus for a minimum of one year. But if you have the budget and your company or product lends itself to the size and shape of a bus, you can get a lot of mileage (no pun intended) from this form of advertising. Discounts are available for buying multiple signs and for multiple-month contracts.

Now, if you don't want to wrap an entire bus, you can purchase one side and the back or one side and the front and share the bus with another advertiser. You can also purchase just the back or just the front of a bus.

Outdoor billboards and transit signs are very effective when used together, whether it is a full outdoor billboard or repeating your own store sign. The combination keeps some of your signs anchored and some mobile for great coverage.

## **Designs and Schedules**

When considering your design, treat the signs as moving billboards. People won't have a chance to look at the message for a long period of time, so use bright colors to attract attention and simple ideas with just a few words for effective transit advertising.

Whether you advertise in, on or all over the bus, you can sometimes request that your bus travel on very specific routes or, if your message has broad audience appeal, on many routes so as to cover your maximum desired audience throughout your contract period. Your bus company will provide you with a complete list of routes.

If you plan on being a regular transit advertiser, speak to the director of marketing at your local bus company about placing an ad in the next batch of schedules printed. Schedules are usually updated annually, so if you decide to do this, use a generic ad that won't become outdated over that period of time.