



1. Name of practice

Promotion of reading in the subway of Mexico City

Using the public transport in megacities like Mexico City is not always comfortable because it is often overcrowded and there is a lack of security. The distances are long and a lot of users spend their time considering only the problems of mass transportation. Public transport security requires a mobility culture for the benefit of everybody. It is alarming that the Mexican population is reading less and less. Reading is very important in order to enrich the access to culture of the masses and to promote solidarity and respect towards other users of public transport. Additionally, reading would be a good way of improving entertainment during journeys. Thus, this campaign will promote the free reading in the subway.

2. Location(s)

Mexico City, Mexico

3. Actors

Autonomous government of Mexico-City
Subway operators
Volunteers

4. Issues addressed/ focus

Modal split: better acceptability of mass transport

5. Stage of implementation

2007, apparently still ongoing.

6. Background

This campaign is a pilot project and was only introduced at the subway line no. 3 which links Mexico-City from north to south. This campaign does not only promote the reading, it also promotes respect among the users of public transport aiming to increase security. Using the subway is no longer annoying, but supports social a social approach.

7. What was/ is being done?

The books and texts that are offered to the public are small and written by very famous authors. 250,000 free copies are at the disposal of the subway users. 400 young volunteers with orange T-shirts - the colour of the subway wagons - hand them to the public. The young people promote reading and invite the users to borrow a copy until the end of their journey. With this, their journey become more comfortable and at the same time enhances their culture.

The users of the subway are normally low to middle class people, therefore, this promotion of reading is a very important campaign to spread culture and consciousness within the public.

The subway of Mexico-City is a public body; therefore the autonomous government of Mexico-City and the operator of the subway are the driving forces behind this campaign. Indeed the public as end users is very important, the more the public demands to read more of these copies the more the sponsors of this campaign are obliged to offer them.

8. Outcomes and impacts

This campaign has been very well accepted and a lot of copies have been requested. Around 250.000 copies have been available to the public through 400 volunteers who distribute them. The volunteers have been receiving a modest remuneration for this job. It is difficult to measure a change of culture of mobility, but it does appear positive thus far, in any case.

9. Sustainability

The costs of the campaign were about 5 million Pesos (this equates to 500.000 US-Dollar), which were covered by donations. Around 79% of the books were returned, which is positive and of overall benefit to the public desirous of such facilities.

10. Replicability

In other places give-away journals have been distributed to metro line travelers, although the trend has gone down since electronic media is generally more cost effective for advertisers than these print media. But precisely because books tend to be used less than before, many books are given away in the richer countries. These could be distributed in public transport stations in the same way at little cost.

11. Documentation

Contact: [Paloma Saiz Tejeiro](#) via Eltis website

12. Credits / Source:

http://www.eltis.org/index.php?id=13&lang1=en&study_id=1492

Author: Salazar Mauricio