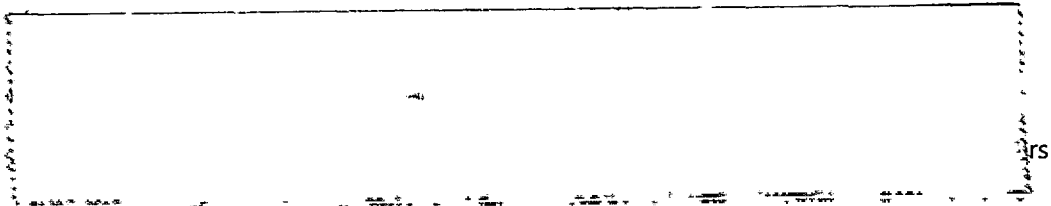


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October 29, 2020

MTA New York City Transit Now Using WhatsApp to Communicate with Customers

*Popular Chat Tool Will Allow More Subway and Bus Riders to Get Real Time Service Information
With Help of Google Translate, Customers Can Now Connect Directly to Transit Staff in Over 100 Languages*

[See Images from Digital Ad Campaign](#)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced the formal public launch of a new initiative that will allow subway and bus riders to communicate with New York City Transit in real time using the popular messaging platform WhatsApp. The Authority first introduced the program in August with a series of in-station signs and has been working to improve the internal processes associated with its launch in the months since.

WhatsApp will expand the number of customer service channels available to the system's millions of daily customers and is expected to prove especially helpful for non-native English speakers. By using Google Translate, frontline personnel from NYCT's Digital Communications Unit (DCU) will be able to interact with customers about real time service changes or other matters in real time in 108 languages.

"It's absolutely imperative that *all* of our customers are able to communicate with us about their train or bus service in real time," said New York City Transit Chief Customer Officer Sarah Meyer. "Millions of people

follow our Twitter handles and thousands engage with us each week but expanding the number of customers we communicate with is at the core of my job and we can always reach more New Yorkers.”

Since launching in late August, the DCU has already received approximately 4,000 messages from New Yorkers via WhatsApp—nearly 10 percent of the total incoming volume from other social media channels—with an average of three customer replies per conversation. Efforts to grow the number of users and refine the ways in which riders can get customer service support will continue into the new year. Additional in-station signage will begin to appear in the coming weeks as will a social media campaign to promote the use of the tool.

The use of a new technology builds on the DCU's widely praised Twitter outreach. Over the last two months alone, DCU team members have received nearly 40,000 Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp messages in nearly 25,000 separate conversations.

Customers can chat with NYC Transit by visiting <http://new.mta.info/whatsapp>.

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